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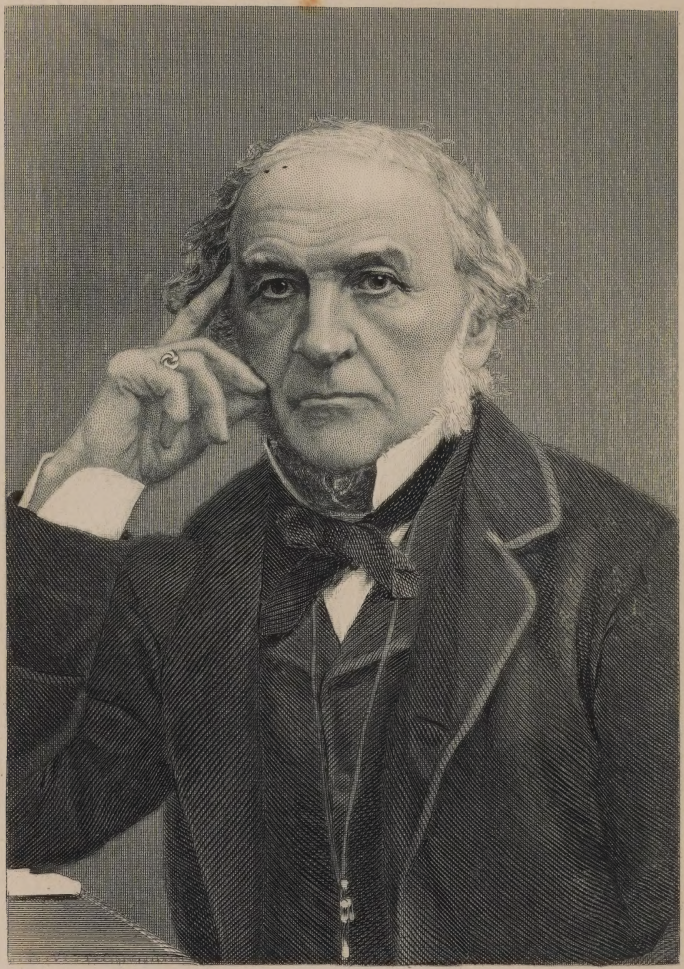

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY. By James Anthony Froude	3
RACE AND LANGUAGE. By Edward A. Freeman . .	55
KIN BEYOND SEA. By William Ewart Gladstone . .	151
PRIVATE JUDGMENT. By John Henry Newman . .	221
AN APOLOGY FOR PLAINSPEAKING. By Leslie Stephen	281

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

BORN 1818.

THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY.

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION FEBRUARY 5, 1864.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I have undertaken to speak to you this evening on what is called the Science of History. I fear it is a dry subject; and there seems, indeed, something incongruous in the very connection of such words as Science and History. It is as if we were to talk of the color of sound, or the longitude of the Rule-of-three. Where it is so difficult to make out the truth on the commonest disputed fact in matters passing under our very eyes, how can we talk of a science in things long past, which come to us only through books? It often seems to me as if History was like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those which do not suit our purpose.

I will try to make the thing intelligible, and I will try not to weary you; but I am doubtful of my success either way. First, however, I wish to say a word or two about the eminent person whose name is connected with this way of looking at History, and whose premature death struck us all with such a sudden sorrow. Many of you, perhaps, recollect Mr. Buckle as he stood not so long ago in this place. He spoke more than an hour without a note,—never repeating himself, never wasting words; laying out his matter as easily and as pleasantly as if he had been talking to us at his own fireside. We might think what we pleased of Mr. Buckle's views, but it was plain enough that he was a man of uncommon power; and he had qualities also—qualities to which he, perhaps, himself attached little value—as rare as they were admirable.

Most of us, when we have hit on something which we are pleased to think important and original, feel as if we should burst with it. We come out into the book-market with our wares in hand, and ask for thanks and recognition. Mr. Buckle, at an early age, conceived the thought which made him famous, but he took the measure of his abilities. He knew that

whenever he pleased he could command personal distinction, but he cared more for his subject than for himself. He was contented to work with patient reticence, unknown and unheard of, for twenty years; and then, at middle life, he produced a work which was translated at once into French and German, and, of all places in the world, fluttered the dovecots of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg.

Goethe says somewhere, that as soon as a man has done any thing remarkable, there seems to be a general conspiracy to prevent him from doing it again. He is feasted, fêted, caressed; his time is stolen from him by breakfasts, dinners, societies, idle businesses of a thousand kinds. Mr. Buckle had his share of all this; but there are also more dangerous enemies that wait upon success like his. He had scarcely won for himself the place which he deserved, than his health was found shattered by his labors. He had but time to show us how large a man he was, time just to sketch the outlines of his philosophy, and he passed away as suddenly as he appeared. He went abroad to recover strength for his work, but his work was done with and over. He died of a fever at Damascus, vexed only that he was

compelled to leave it uncompleted. Almost his last conscious words were: "My book, my book! I shall never finish my book!" He went away as he had lived, nobly careless of himself, and thinking only of the thing which he had undertaken to do.

But his labor had not been thrown away. Disagree with him as we might, the effect which he had already produced was unmistakable, and it is not likely to pass away. What he said was not essentially new. Some such interpretation of human things is as early as the beginning of thought. But Mr. Buckle, on the one hand, had the art which belongs to men of genius: he could present his opinions with peculiar distinctness; and, on the other hand, there is much in the mode of speculation at present current among us for which those opinions have an unusual fascination. They do not please us, but they excite and irritate us. We are angry with them; and we betray, in being so, an uneasy misgiving that there may be more truth in those opinions than we like to allow.

Mr. Buckle's general theory was something of this kind: When human creatures began first to look about them in the world they lived

in, there seemed to be no order in any thing. Days and nights were not the same length. The air was sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Some of the stars rose and set like the sun; some were almost motionless in the sky; some described circles round a central star above the north horizon. The planets went on principles of their own; and in the elements there seemed nothing but caprice. Sun and moon would at times go out in eclipse. Sometimes the earth itself would shake under men's feet; and they could only suppose that earth and air and sky and water were inhabited and managed by creatures as wayward as themselves.

Time went on, and the disorder began to arrange itself. Certain influences seemed beneficent to men, others malignant and destructive; and the world was supposed to be animated by good spirits and evil spirits, who were continually fighting against each other, in outward nature and in human creatures themselves. Finally, as men observed more and imagined less, these interpretations gave way also. Phenomena the most opposite in effect were seen to be the result of the same natural law. The fire did not burn the house down if the owners of it were careful, but remained on the hearth and

boiled the pot; nor did it seem more inclined to burn a bad man's house down than a good man's, provided the badness did not take the form of negligence. The phenomena of nature were found for the most part to proceed in an orderly, regular way, and their variations to be such as could be counted upon. From observing the order of things, the step was easy to cause and effect. An eclipse, instead of being a sign of the anger of Heaven, was found to be the necessary and innocent result of the relative position of sun, moon, and earth. The comets became bodies in space, unrelated to the beings who had imagined that all creation was watching them and their doings. By degrees caprice, volition, all symptoms of arbitrary action, disappeared out of the universe; and almost every phenomenon in earth or heaven was found attributable to some law, either understood or perceived to exist. Thus nature was reclaimed from the imagination. The first fantastic conception of things gave way before the moral; the moral in turn gave way before the natural; and at last there was left but one small tract of jungle where the theory of law had failed to penetrate,—the doings and characters of human creatures themselves.

There, and only there, amidst the conflicts of reason and emotion, conscience and desire, spiritual forces were still conceived to exist. Cause and effect were not traceable when there was a free volition to disturb the connection. In all other things, from a given set of conditions the consequences necessarily followed. With man, the word "law" changed its meaning; and instead of a fixed order, which he could not choose but follow, it became a moral precept, which he might disobey if he dared.

This it was which Mr. Buckle disbelieved. The economy which prevailed throughout nature, he thought it very unlikely should admit of this exception. He considered that human beings acted necessarily from the impulse of outward circumstances upon their mental and bodily condition at any given moment. Every man, he said, acted from a motive; and his conduct was determined by the motive which affected him most powerfully. Every man naturally desires what he supposes to be good for him; but, to do well, he must know well. He will eat poison, so long as he does not know that it is poison. Let him see that it will kill him, and he will not touch it. The question was not of moral right and wrong. Once let him be

thoroughly made to feel that the thing is destructive, and he will leave it alone by the law of his nature. His virtues are the result of knowledge; his faults, the necessary consequence of the want of it. A boy desires to draw. He knows nothing about it: he draws men like trees or houses, with their centre of gravity anywhere. He makes mistakes because he knows no better. We do not blame him. Till he is better taught, he cannot help it. But his instruction begins. He arrives at straight lines; then at solids; then at curves. He learns perspective, and light and shade. He observes more accurately the forms which he wishes to represent. He perceives effects, and he perceives the means by which they are produced. He has learned what to do; and, in part, he has learned how to do it. His after-progress will depend on the amount of force which his nature possesses; but all this is as natural as the growth of an acorn. You do not preach to the acorn that it is its duty to become a large tree; you do not preach to the art-pupil that it is his duty to become a Holbein. You plant your acorn in favorable soil, where it can have light and air, and be sheltered from the wind; you remove the superfluous branches, you train the strength into the leading shoots. The

acorn will then become as fine a tree as it has vital force to become. The difference between men and other things is only in the largeness and variety of man's capacities; and in this special capacity, that he alone has the power of observing the circumstances favorable to his own growth, and can apply them for himself, yet, again, with this condition,—that he is not, as is commonly supposed, free to choose whether he will make use of these appliances or not. When he knows what is good for him, he will choose it; and he will judge what is good for him by the circumstances which have made him what he is.

And what he would do, Mr. Buckle supposed that he always had done. His history had been a natural growth as much as the growth of the acorn. His improvement had followed the progress of his knowledge; and, by a comparison of his outward circumstances with the condition of his mind, his whole proceedings on this planet, his creeds and constitutions, his good deeds and his bad, his arts and his sciences, his empires and his revolutions, would be found all to arrange themselves into clear relations of cause and effect.

If, when Mr. Buckle pressed his conclusions,

we objected the difficulty of finding what the truth about past times really was, he would admit it candidly as far as concerned individuals; but there was not the same difficulty, he said, with masses of men. We might disagree about the character of Julius or Tiberius Cæsar, but we could know well enough the Romans of the Empire. We had their literature to tell us how they thought; we had their laws to tell us how they governed; we had the broad face of the world, the huge mountainous outline of their general doings upon it, to tell us how they acted. He believed it was all reducible to laws, and could be made as intelligible as the growth of the chalk cliffs or the coal measures.

And thus consistently Mr. Buckle cared little for individuals. He did not believe (as some one has said) that the history of mankind is the history of its great men. Great men with him were but larger atoms, obeying the same impulses with the rest, only perhaps a trifle more erratic. With them or without them, the course of things would have been much the same.

As an illustration of the truth of his view, he would point to the new science of Political Economy. Here already was a large area of human activity in which natural laws were

found to act unerringly. Men had gone on for centuries trying to regulate trade on moral principles. They would fix wages according to some imaginary rule of fairness; they would fix prices by what they considered things ought to cost; they encouraged one trade or discouraged another, for moral reasons. They might as well have tried to work a steam-engine on moral reasons. The great statesmen whose names were connected with these enterprises might have as well legislated that water should run up-hill. There were natural laws, fixed in the conditions of things; and to contend against them was the old battle of the Titans against the gods.

As it was with political economy, so it was with all other forms of human activity; and as the true laws of political economy explained the troubles which people fell into in old times because they were ignorant of them, so the true laws of human nature, as soon as we knew them, would explain their mistakes in more serious matters, and enable us to manage better for the future. Geographical position, climate, air, soil, and the like, had their several influences. The northern nations are hardy and industrious, because they must till the earth if they would eat

the fruits of it, and because the temperature is too low to make an idle life enjoyable. In the south, the soil is more productive, while less food is wanted and fewer clothes; and, in the exquisite air, exertion is not needed to make the sense of existence delightful. Therefore, in the south we find men lazy and indolent.

True, there are difficulties in these views; the home of the languid Italian was the home also of the sternest race of whom the story of mankind retains a record. And again, when we are told that the Spaniards are superstitious because Spain is a country of earthquakes, we remember Japan, the spot in all the world where earthquakes are most frequent, and where at the same time there is the most serene disbelief in any supernatural agency whatsoever.

Moreover, if men grow into what they are by natural laws, they cannot help being what they are; and if they cannot help being what they are, a good deal will have to be altered in our general view of human obligations and responsibilities.

That, however, in these theories there is a great deal of truth, is quite certain, were there but a hope that those who maintain them would

be contented with that admission. A man born in a Mahometan country grows up a Mahometan; in a Catholic country, a Catholic; in a Protestant country, a Protestant. His opinions are like his language: he learns to think as he learns to speak; and it is absurd to suppose him responsible for being what nature makes him. We take pains to educate children. There is a good education and a bad education; there are rules well ascertained by which characters are influenced; and, clearly enough, it is no mere matter for a boy's free will whether he turns out well or ill. We try to train him into good habits; we keep him out of the way of temptations; we see that he is well taught; we mix kindness and strictness; we surround him with every good influence we can command. These are what are termed the advantages of a good education; and if we fail to provide those under our care with it, and if they go wrong, the responsibility we feel is as much ours as theirs. This is at once an admission of the power over us of outward circumstances.

In the same way, we allow for the strength of temptations, and the like.

In general, it is perfectly obvious that men do necessarily absorb, out of the influences in

which they grow up, something which gives a complexion to their whole after-character.

When historians have to relate great social or speculative changes, the overthrow of a monarchy, or the establishment of a creed, they do but half their duty if they merely relate the events. In an account, for instance, of the rise of Mahometanism, it is not enough to describe the character of the Prophet, the ends which he set before him, the means which he made use of, and the effect which he produced; the historian must show what there was in the condition of the Eastern races which enabled Mahomet to act upon them so powerfully; their existing beliefs, their existing moral and political condition.

In our estimate of the past, and in our calculations of the future, in the judgments which we pass upon one another, we measure responsibility, not by the thing done, but by the opportunities which people have had of knowing better or worse. In the efforts which we make to keep our children from bad associations or friends, we admit that external circumstances have a powerful effect in making men what they are.

But are circumstances every thing? That is

the whole question. A science of history, if it is more than a misleading name, implies that the relation between cause and effect holds in human things as completely as in all others; that the origin of human actions is not to be looked for in mysterious properties of the mind, but in influences which are palpable and ponderable.

When natural causes are liable to be set aside and neutralized by what is called volition, the word Science is out of place. If it is free to man to choose what he will do or not do, there is no adequate science of him. If there is a science of him, there is no free choice, and the praise or blame with which we regard one another are impertinent and out of place.

I am trespassing upon these ethical grounds because, unless I do, the subject cannot be made intelligible. Mankind are but an aggregate of individuals; History is but the record of individual action: and what is true of the part is true of the whole.

We feel keenly about such things, and, when the logic becomes peplexing, we are apt to grow rhetorical about them. But rhetoric is only misleading. Whatever the truth may be, it is best that we should know it; and for truth of any kind we should keep our heads and hearts as cool as we can.

I will say at once, that, if we had the whole case before us; if we were taken, like Leibnitz's Tarquin, into the council-chamber of Nature, and were shown what we really were, where we came from, and where we were going, however unpleasant it might be for some of us to find ourselves, like Tarquin, made into villains, from the subtle necessities of "the best of all possible worlds,"—nevertheless, some such theory as Mr. Buckle's might possibly turn out to be true. Likely enough, there is some great "equation of the universe" where the value of the unknown quantities can be determined. But we must treat things in relation to our own powers and positions, and the question is, whether the sweep of those vast curves can be measured by the intellect of creatures of a day like ourselves.

The "Faust" of Goethe, tired of the barren round of earthly knowledge, calls magic to his aid. He desires, first, to see the spirit of the Macrocosmos, but his heart fails him before he ventures that tremendous experiment, and he summons before him, instead, the spirit of his own race. There he feels himself at home. The stream of life and the storm of action, the everlasting ocean of existence, the web and the

woof, and the roaring loom of Time,—he gazes upon them all, and in passionate exultation claims fellowship with the awful thing before him. But the majestic vision fades, and a voice comes to him,—"Thou art fellow with the spirits which thy mind can grasp, not with me."

Had Mr. Buckle tried to follow his principles into detail, it might have fared no better with him than with "Faust."

What are the conditions of a science? and when may any subject be said to enter the scientific stage? I suppose when the facts begin to resolve themselves into groups; when phenomena are no longer isolated experiences, but appear in connection and order; when, after certain antecedents, certain consequences are uniformly seen to follow; when facts enough have been collected to furnish a basis for conjectural explanation; and when conjectures have so far ceased to be utterly vague that it is possible in some degree to foresee the future by the help of them.

Till a subject has advanced as far as this, to speak of a science of it is an abuse of language. It is not enough to say that there must be a science of human things because there is a

science of all other things. This is like saying the planets must be inhabited because the only planet of which we have any experience is inhabited. It may or may not be true, but it is not a practical question; it does not affect the practical treatment of the matter in hand.

Let us look at the history of Astronomy.

So long as sun, moon, and planets were supposed to be gods or angels; so long as the sword of Orion was not a metaphor, but a fact; and the groups of stars which inlaid the floor of heaven were the glittering trophies of the loves and wars of the Pantheon,—so long there was no science of Astronomy. There was fancy, imagination, poetry, perhaps reverence, but no science. As soon, however, as it was observed that the stars retained their relative places; that the times of their rising and setting varied with the seasons; that sun, moon, and planets moved among them in a plane, and the belt of the Zodiac was marked out and divided,—then a new order of things began. Traces of the earlier stage remained in the names of the signs and constellations, just as the Scandinavian mythology survives now in the names of the days of the week; but, for all that, the understanding was now at work on the thing; science had begun, and the

first triumph of it was the power of foretelling the future. Eclipses were perceived to recur in cycles of nineteen years, and philosophers were able to say when an eclipse was to be looked for. The periods of the planets were determined. Theories were invented to account for their eccentricities; and, false as those theories might be, the position of the planets could be calculated with moderate certainty by them. The very first result of the science, in its most imperfect stage, was a power of foresight; and this was possible before any one true astronomical law had been dircovered.

We should not therefore question the possibility of a science of history because the explations of its phenomena were rudimentary or imperfect: that they might be, and long continue to be, and yet enough might be done to show that there was such a thing, and that it was not entirely without use. But how was it that in those rude days, with small knowledge of mathematics, and with no better instruments than flat walls and dial-plates, those first astronomers made progress so considerable? Because, I suppose, the phenomena which they were observing recurred, for the most part, within moderate intervals; so that they could

collect large experience within the compass of their natural lives; because days and months and years were measurable periods, and within them the more simple phenomena perpetually repeated themselves.

But how would it have been if, instead of turning on its axis once in twenty-four hours, the earth had taken a year about it; if the year had been nearly four hundred years; if man's life had been no longer than it is, and for the initial steps of astronomy there had been nothing to depend upon except observations recorded in history? How many ages would have passed, had this been our condition, before it would have occurred to any one, that, in what they saw night after night, there was any kind of order at all?

We can see to some extent how it would have been, by the present state of those parts of the science which in fact depend on remote recorded observations. The movements of the comets are still extremely uncertain. The times of their return can be calculated only with the greatest vagueness.

And yet such a hypothesis as I have suggested would but inadequately express the position in which we are in fact placed toward history.

There the phenomena never repeat themselves. There we are dependent wholly on the record of things said to have happened once, but which never happen or can happen a second time. There no experiment is possible; we can watch for no recurring fact to test the worth of our conjectures. It has been suggested fancifully, that, if we consider the universe to be infinite, time is the same as eternity, and the past is perpetually present. Light takes nine years to come to us from Sirius: those rays which we may see to-night, when we leave this place, left Sirius nine years ago; and could the inhabitants of Sirius see the earth at this moment, they would see the English army in the trenches before Sebastopol, Florence Nightingale watching at Scutari over the wounded at Inkermann, and the peace of England undisturbed by "Essays and Reviews."

As the stars recede into distance, so time recedes with them; and there may be, and probably are, stars from which Noah might be seen stepping into the ark, Eve listening to the temptation of the serpent, or that older race, eating the oysters and leaving the shell-heaps behind them, when the Baltic was an open sea.

Could we but compare notes, something

might be done; but of this there is no present hope, and without it there will be no science of history. Eclipses, recorded in ancient books, can be verified by calculations, aud lost dates can be recovered by them; and we can foresee, by the laws which they follow, when there will be eclipses again. Will a time ever be when the lost secret of the foundation of Rome can be recovered by historic laws? If not, where is our science? It may be said that this is a particular fact, that we can deal satisfactorily with general phenomena affecting eras and cycles. Well, then, let us take some general phenomenon; Mahometanism, for instance, or Buddhism. Those are large enough. Can you imagine a science which would have[1] *foretold* such movements as those? The state of things out of which they rose is obscure; but, suppose it not obscure, can you conceive that, with any amount of historical insight into the old Oriental beliefs, you could have seen that they were about to transform themselves into those particular forms and no other?

[1] It is objected that geology is a science: yet that geology cannot foretell the future changes of the earth's surface. Geology is not a century old, and its periods are measured by millions of years. Yet, if geology cannot foretell future facts, it enabled Sir Roderick Murchison to foretell the discovery of Australian gold.

It is not enough to say, that, after the fact, you can understand partially how Mahometanism came to be. All historians worth the name have told us something about that. But when we talk of science, we mean something with more ambitious pretences, we mean something which can foresee as well as explain; and, thus looked at, to state the problem is to show its absurdity. As little could the wisest man have foreseen this mighty revolution, as thirty years ago such a thing as Mormonism could have been anticipated in America; as little as it could have been foreseen that table-turning and spirit-rapping would have been an outcome of the scientific culture of England in the nineteenth century.

The greatest of Roman thinkers, gazing mournfully at the seething mass of moral putrefaction round him, detected and deigned to notice among its elements a certain detestable superstition, so he called it, rising up amidst the offscouring of the Jews, which was named Christianity. Could Tacitus have looked forward nine centuries to the Rome of Gregory VII, could he have beheld the representative of the majesty of the Cæsars holding the stirrup of the Pontiff of that vile and execrated

sect, the spectacle would scarcely have appeared to him the fulfilment of a national expectation, or an intelligible result of the causes in operation round him. Tacitus, indeed, was born before the science of history; but would M. Comte have seen any more clearly?

Nor is the case much better if we are less hard upon our philosophy; if we content ourselves with the past, and require only a scientific explanation of that.

First, for the facts themselves. They come to us through the minds of those who recorded them, neither machines nor angels, but fallible creatures, with human passions and prejudices. Tacitus and Thucydides were perhaps the ablest men who ever gave themselves to writing history; the ablest, and also the most incapable of conscious falsehood. Yet even now, after all these centuries, the truth of what they relate is called in question. Good reasons can be given to show that neither of them can be confidently trusted. If we doubt with these, whom are we to believe?

Or, again, let the facts be granted. To revert to my simile of the box of letters, you have but to select such facts as suit you, you have but to leave alone those which do not suit you, and,

let your theory of history be what it will, you can find no difficulty in providing facts to prove it.

You may have your Hegel's philosophy of history, or you may have your Schlegel's philosophy of history; you may prove from history that the world is governed in detail by a special Providence; you may prove that there is no sign of any moral agent in the universe, except man; you may believe, if you like it, in the old theory of the wisdom of antiquity; you may speak, as was the fashion in the fifteenth century, of "our fathers, who had more wit and wisdom than we"; or you may talk of "our barbarian ancestors," and describe their wars as the scuffling of kites and crows.

You may maintain that the evolution of humanity has been an unbroken progress toward perfection; you may maintain that there has been no progress at all, and that man remains the same poor creature that he ever was; or, lastly, you may say, with the author of the "Contract Social," that men were purest and best in primeval simplicity,—

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

In all or any of these views, history will stand

your friend. History, in its passive irony, will make no objection. Like Jarno, in Goethe's novel, it will not condescend to argue with you, and will provide you with abundant illustrations of any thing which you may wish to believe.

"What is history," said Napoleon, "but a fiction agreed upon?" "My friend," said Faust to the student, who was growing enthusiastic about the spirit of past ages,—"my friend, the times which are gone are a book with seven seals; and what you call the spirit of past ages is but the spirit of this or that worthy gentleman in whose mind those ages are reflected."

One lesson, and only one, history may be said to repeat with distinctness: that the world is built somehow on moral foundations; that, in the long run, it is well with the good; in the long run, it is ill with the wicked. But this is no science; it is no more than the old doctrine taught long ago by the Hebrew prophets. The theories of M. Comte and his disciples advance us, after all, not a step beyond the trodden and familiar ground. If men are not entirely animals, they are at least half animals, and are subject in this aspect of them to the conditions of animals. So far as those parts of man's doings are concerned, which neither have, nor need

have, any thing moral about them, so far the laws of him are calculable. There are laws for his digestion, and laws of the means by which his digestive organs are supplied with matter. But pass beyond them, and where are we? In a world where it would be as easy to calculate men's actions by laws like those of positive philosophy as to measure the orbit of Neptune with a foot rule, or weigh Sirius in a grocer's scale.

And it is not difficult to see why this should be. The first principle, on which the theory of a science of history can be plausibly argued, is that all actions whatsoever arise from self-interest. It may be enlightened self-interest, it may be unenlightened; but it is assumed as an axiom, that every man, in whatever he does, is aiming at something which he considers will promote his happiness. His conduct is not determined by his will; it is determined by the object of his desire. Adam Smith, in laying the foundations of political economy, expressly eliminates every other motive. He does not say that men never act on other motives; still less, that they never ought to act on other motives. He asserts merely that, as far as the arts of production are concerned, and of buying and

selling, the action of self-interest may be counted upon as uniform. What Adam Smith says of political economy, Mr. Buckle would extend over the whole circle of human activity.

Now, that which especially distinguishes a high order of man from a low order of man—that which constitutes human goodness, human greatness, human nobleness—is surely not the degree of enlightenment with which men pursue their own advantage: but it is self-forgetfulness, it is self-sacrifice; it is the disregard of personal pleasure, personal indulgence, personal advantages remote or present, because some other line of conduct is more right.

We are sometimes told that this is but another way of expressing the same thing; that, when a man prefers doing what is right, it is only because to do right gives him a higher satisfaction. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be a difference in the very heart and nature of things. The martyr goes to the stake, the patriot to the scaffold, not with a view to any future reward, to themselves, but because it is a glory to fling away their lives for truth and freedom. And so through all phases of existence, to the smallest details of common life, the beautiful character is the unselfish character. Those whom we

most love and admire are those to whom the thought of self seems never to occur; who do simply and with no ulterior aim—with no thought whether it will be pleasant to themselves or unpleasant—that which is good and right and generous.

Is this still selfishness, only more enlightened? I do not think so. The essence of true nobility, is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower. Surely it is a paradox to speak of the self-interest of a martyr who dies for a cause, the triumph of which he will never enjoy; and the greatest of that great company in all ages would have done what they did, had their personal prospects closed with the grave. Nay, there have been those so zealous for some glorious principle as to wish themselves blotted out of the book of Heaven if the cause of Heaven could succeed.

And out of this mysterious quality, whatever it be, arise the higher relations of human life, the higher modes of human obligation. Kant, the philosopher, used to say that there were two things which overwhelmed him with awe as he thought of them. One was the star-

sown deep of space, without limit and without end; the other was, right and wrong. Right, the sacrifice of self to good; wrong, the sacrifice of good to self,—not graduated objects of desire, to which we are determined by the degrees of our knowledge, but wide asunder as pole and pole, as light and darkness: one the object of infinite love; the other, the object of infinite detestation and scorn. It is in this marvellous power in men to do wrong (it is an old story, but none the less true for that),—it is in this power to do wrong—wrong or right, as it lies somehow with ourselves to choose—that the impossibility stands of forming scientific calculations of what men will do before the fact, or scientific explanations of what they have done after the fact. If men were consistently selfish, you might analyze their motives; if they were consistently noble they would express in their conduct the laws of the highest perfection. But so long as two natures are mixed together, and the strange creature which results from the combination is now under one influence and now under another, so long you will make nothing of him except from the old-fashioned moral—or, if you please, imaginative—point of view.

Even the laws of political economy itself cease to guide us when they touch moral government. So long as labor is a chattel to be bought and sold, so long, like other commodities, it follows the condition of supply and demand. But if, for his misfortune, an employer considers that he stands in human relations toward his workmen; if he believes, rightly or wrongly, that he is responsible for them; that in return for their labor he is bound to see that their children are decently taught, and they and their families decently fed and clothed and lodged; that he ought to care for them in sickness and in old age,—then political economy will no longer direct him, and the relations between himself and his dependents will have to be arranged on quite other principles.

So long as he considers only his own material profit, so long supply and demand will settle every difficulty; but the introduction of a new factor spoils the equation.

And it is precisely in this debatable ground of low motives and noble emotions; in the struggle, ever failing yet ever renewed, to carry truth and justice into the administration of human society; in the establishment of states and in the overthrow of tyrannies; in the rise

and fall of creeds; in the world of ideas; in the character and deeds of the great actors in the drama of life, where good and evil fight out their everlasting battle, now ranged in opposite camps, now and more often in the heart, both of them, of each living man,—that the true human interest of history resides. The progress of industries, the growth of material and mechanical civilization, are interesting; but they are not the most interesting. They have their reward in the increase of material comforts; but, unless we are mistaken about our nature, they do not highly concern us after all.

Once more: not only is there in men this baffling duality of principle, but there is something else in us which still more defies scientific analysis.

Mr. Buckle would deliver himself from the eccentricities of this and that individual by a doctrine of averages. Though he cannot tell whether A, B, or C will cut his throat, he may assure himself that one man in every fifty thousand, or thereabout (I forget the exact proportion), will cut his throat, and with this he consoles himself. No doubt it is a comforting discovery. Unfortunately, the average of one generation need not be the average of the

next. We may be converted by the Japanese, for all that we know, and the Japanese methods of taking leave of life may become fashionable among us. Nay, did not Novalis suggest that the whole race of men would at last become so disgusted with their impotence, that they would extinguish themselves by a simultaneous act of suicide, and make room for a better order of beings? Anyhow, the fountain out of which the race is flowing perpetually changes; no two generations are alike. Whether there is a change in the organization itself we cannot tell; but this is certain,—that, as the planet varies with the atmosphere which surrounds it, so each new generation varies from the last, because it inhales as its atmosphere the accumulated experience and knowledge of the whole past of the world. These things form the spiritual air which we breathe as we grow; and, in the infinite multiplicity of elements of which that air is now composed, it is forever a matter of conjecture what the minds will be like which expand under its influence.

From the England of Fielding and Richardson to the England of Miss Austen, from the England of Miss Austen to the England of Railways and Free Trade, how vast the change!

Yet perhaps Sir Charles Grandison would not seem so strange to us now as one of ourselves will seem to our great-grandchildren. The world moves faster and faster; and the difference will probably be considerably greater.

The temper of each new generation is a continual surprise. The Fates delight to contradict our most confident expectations. Gibbon believed that the era of conquerors was at an end. Had he lived out the full life of man, he would have seen Europe at the feet of Napoleon. But a few years ago we believed the world had grown too civilized for war, and the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was to be the inauguration of a new era. Battles bloody as Napoleon's are now the familiar tale of every day; and the arts which have made greatest progress are the arts of destruction. What next? We may strain our eyes into the future which lies beyond this waning century; but never was conjecture more at fault. It is blank darkness, which even the imagination fails to people.

What, then, is the use of History, and what are its lessons? If it can tell us little of the past, and nothing of the future, why waste our time over so barren a study?

First, it is a voice forever sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust or vanity, the price has to be paid at last; not always by the chief offenders, but paid by some one. Justice and truth alone endure and live. Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes at last to them, in French revolutions and other terrible ways.

That is one lesson of history. Another is, that we should draw no horoscopes; that we should expect little, for what we expect will not come to pass. Revolutions, reformations, —those vast movements into which heroes and saints have flung themselves, in the belief that they were the dawn of the millennium,—have not borne the fruit which they looked for. Millenniums are still far away. These great convulsions leave the world changed,—perhaps improved, but not improved as the actors in them hoped it would be. Luther would have gone to work with less heart, could he have foreseen the Thirty Years' War, and in the distance the theology of Tubingen. Washington

might have hesitated to draw the sword against England, could he have seen the country which he made as we see it now.[1]

The most reasonable anticipations fail us, antecedents the most apposite mislead us, because the conditions of human problems never repeat themselves. Some new feature alters every thing,—some element which we detect only in its after-operation.

But this, it may be said, is but a meagre outcome. Can the long records of humanity, with all its joys and sorrows, its sufferings and its conquests, teach us more than this? Let us approach the subject from another side.

If you were asked to point out the special features in which Shakespeare's plays are so transcendently excellent, you would mention perhaps, among others, this—that his stories are not put together, and his characters are not conceived, to illustrate any particular law or principle. They teach many lessons, but not any one prominent above another; and when we have drawn from them all the direct instruction which they contain, there remains still something unresolved,—something which the

[1] February, 1864.

artist gives, and which the philosopher cannot give.

It is in this characteristic that we are accustomed to say Shakespeare's supreme *truth* lies. He represents real life. His drama teaches as life teaches,—neither less nor more. He builds his fabrics, as Nature does, on right and wrong; but he does not struggle to make Nature more systematic than she is. In the subtle interflow of good and evil; in the unmerited sufferings of innocence; in the disproportion of penalties to desert; in the seeming blindness with which justice, in attempting to assert itself, overwhelms innocent and guilty in a common ruin,—Shakespeare is true to real experience. The mystery of life he leaves as he finds it; and, in his most tremendous positions, he is addressing rather the intellectual emotions than the understanding,—knowing well that the understanding in such things is at fault, and the sage as ignorant as the child.

Only the highest order of genius can represent Nature thus. An inferior artist produces either something entirely immoral, where good and evil are names, and nobility of disposition is supposed to show itself in the absolute disregard of them, or else, if he is a better kind of man,

he will force on Nature a didactic purpose; he composes what are called moral tales, which may edify the conscience, but only mislead the intellect.

The finest work of this kind produced in modern times is Lessing's play of "Nathan the Wise." The object of it is to teach religious toleration. The doctrine is admirable, the mode in which it is enforced is interesting; but it has the fatal fault that it is not true. Nature does not teach religious toleration by any such direct method; and the result is—no one knew it better than Lessing himself—that the play is not poetry, but only splendid manufacture. Shakespeare is eternal; Lessing's "Nathan" will pass away with the mode of thought which gave it birth. One is based on fact; the other, on human theory about fact. The theory seems at first sight to contain the most immediate instruction; but it is not really so.

Cibber and others, as you know, wanted to alter Shakespeare. The French king, in "Lear," was to be got rid of; Cordelia was to marry Edgar, and Lear himself was to be rewarded for his sufferings by a golden old age. They could not bear that Hamlet should suffer for the sins of Claudius. The wicked king was to die, and

the wicked mother; and Hamlet and Ophelia were to make a match of it, and live happily ever after. A common novelist would have arranged it thus; and you would have had your comfortable moral that wickedness was fitly punished, and virtue had its due reward, and all would have been well. But Shakespeare would not have it so. Shakespeare knew that crime was not so simple in its consequences, or Providence so paternal. He was contented to take the truth from life; and the effect upon the mind of the most correct theory of what life ought to be, compared to the effect of the life itself, is infinitesimal in comparison.

Again, let us compare the popular historical treatment of remarkable incidents with Shakespeare's treatment of them. Look at "Macbeth." You may derive abundant instruction from it,—instruction of many kinds. There is a moral lesson of profound interest in the steps by which a noble nature glides to perdition. In more modern fashion you may speculate, if you like, on the political conditions represented there, and the temptation presented in absolute monarchies to unscrupulous ambition; you may say, like Doctor Slop, these things could not have happened under a constitutional govern-

ment: or, again, you may take up your parable against superstition; you may dilate on the frightful consequences of a belief in witches, and reflect on the superior advantages of an age of schools and newspapers. If the bare facts of the story had come down to us from a chronicler, and an ordinary writer of the nineteenth century had undertaken to relate them, his account, we may depend upon it, would have been put together upon one or other of these principles. Yet, by the side of that unfolding of the secrets of the prison-house of the soul, what lean and shrivelled anatomies the best of such descriptions would seem!

Shakespeare himself, I suppose, could not have given us a theory of what he meant; he gave us the thing itself, on which we might make whatever theories we pleased.

Or, again, look at Homer.

The "Iliad" is from two to three thousand years older than "Macbeth," and yet it is as fresh as if it had been written yesterday. We have there no lessons save in the emotions which rise in us as we read. Homer had no philosophy; he never struggles to press upon us his views about this or that; you can scarcely tell, indeed, whether his sympathies

are Greek or Trojan: but he represents to us faithfully the men and women among whom he lived. He sang the tale of Troy, he touched his lyre, he drained the golden beaker in the halls of men like those on whom he was conferring immortality. And thus, although no Agamemnon, king of men, ever led a Grecian fleet to Ilium; though no Priam sought the midnight tent of Achilles; though Ulysses and Diomed and Nestor were but names, and Helen but a dream, yet, through Homer's power of representing men and women, those old Greeks will still stand out from amidst the darkness of the ancient world with a sharpness of outline which belongs to no period of history except the most recent. For the mere hard purposes of history, the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are the most effective books which ever were written. We see the hall of Menelaus, we see the garden of Alcinous, we see Nausicaa among her maidens on the shore, we see the mellow monarch sitting with ivory sceptre in the market-place dealing out genial justice. Or, again, when the wild mood is on, we can hear the crash of the spears, the rattle of the armor as the heroes fall, and the plunging of the horses among the slain. Could we enter the palace of an old Ionian lord,

we know what we should see there; we know the words in which he would address us. We could meet Hector as a friend. If we could choose a companion to spend an evening with over a fireside, it would be the man of many counsels, the husband of Penelope.

I am not going into the vexed question whether history or poetry is the more true. It has been sometimes said that poetry is the more true, because it can make things more like what our moral sense would prefer they should be. We hear of poetic justice and the like, as if nature and fact were not just enough.

I entirely dissent from that view. So far as poetry attempts to improve on truth in that way, so far it abandons truth, and is false to itself. Even literal facts, exactly as they were, a great poet will prefer whenever he can get them. Shakespeare in the historical plays is studious, wherever possible, to give the very words which he finds to have been used; and it shows how wisely he was guided in this, that those magnificent speeches of Wolsey are taken exactly, with no more change than the metre makes necessary, from Cavendish's Life. Marlborough read Shakespeare for English history, and read nothing else. The poet only is not

bound, when it is inconvenient, to what may be called the accidents of facts. It was enough for Shakespeare to know that Prince Hal in his youth had lived among loose companions, and the tavern in Eastcheap came in to fill out his picture; although Mrs. Quickly and Falstaff and Poins and Bardolph were more likely to have been fallen in with by Shakespeare himself at the Mermaid, than to have been comrades of the true Prince Henry. It was enough for Shakespeare to draw real men, and the situation, whatever it might be, would sit easy on them. In this sense only it is that poetry is truer than History,—that it can make a picture more complete. It may take liberties with time and space, and give the action distinctness by throwing it into more manageable compass. But it may not alter the real conditions of things, or represent life as other than it is. The greatness of the poet depends on his being true to Nature, without insisting that Nature shall theorize with him, without making her more just, more philosophical, more moral than reality; and, in difficult matters, leaving much to reflection which cannot be explained.

And if this be true of poetry—if Homer and

Shakespeare are what they are from the absence of every thing didactic about them—may we not thus learn something of what history should be, and in what sense it should aspire to teach?

If poetry must not theorize, much less should the historian theorize, whose obligations to be true to fact are even greater than the poet's. If the drama is grandest when the action is least explicable by laws, because then it best resembles life, then history will be grandest also under the same conditions. "Macbeth," were it literally true, would be perfect history; and so far as the historian can approach to that kind of model, so far as he can let his story tell itself in the deeds and words of those who act it out, so far is he most successful. His work is no longer the vapor of his own brain, which a breath will scatter; it is the thing itself, which will have interest for all time. A thousand theories may be formed about it,—spiritual theories. Pantheistic theories, cause and effect theories? but each age will have its own philosophy of history, and all these in turn will fail and die. Hegel falls out of date, Schlegel falls out of date, and Compte in good time will fall out of date; the thought about the thing must

change as we change; but the thing itself can never change; and a history is durable or perishable as it contains more or least of the writer's own speculations. The splendid intellect of Gibbon for the most part kept him true to the right course in this; yet the philosophical chapters for which he has been most admired or censured may hereafter be thought the least interesting in his work. The time has been when they would not have been comprehended; the time may come when they will seem commonplace.

It may be said, that in requiring history to be written like a drama, we require an impossibility.

For history to be written with the complete form of a drama, doubtless is impossible; but there are periods, and these the periods, for the most part, of greatest interest to mankind, the history of which may be so written that the actors shall reveal their characters in their own words; where mind can be seen matched against mind, and the great passions of the epoch not simply be described as existing, but be exhibited at their white heat in the souls and hearts possessed by them. There are all the elements of drama—drama of the highest order

—where the huge forces of the times are as the Grecian destiny, and the power of the man is seen either stemming the stream till it overwhelms him, or ruling while he seems to yield to it.

It is Nature's drama,—not Shakespeare's, but a drama none the less.

So at least it seems to me. Wherever possible, let us not be told *about* this man or that. Let us hear the man himself speak, let us see him act, and let us be left to form our own opinions about him. The historian, we are told, must not leave his readers to themselves. He must not only lay the facts before them: he must tell them what he himself thinks about those facts. In my opinion, this is precisely what he ought not to do. Bishop Butler says somewhere, that the best book which could be written would be a book consisting only of premises, from which the readers should draw conclusions for themselves. The highest poetry is the very thing which Butler requires, and the highest history ought to be. We should no more ask for a theory of this or that period of history, than we should ask for a theory of "Macbeth" or "Hamlet." Philosophies of history, sciences of history,—all these there

will continue to be: the fashions of them will change, as our habits of thought will change; each new philosopher will find his chief employment in showing that before him no one understood any thing; but the drama of history is imperishable, and the lessons of it will be like what we learn from Homer or Shakespeare,—lessons for which we have no words.

The address of history is less to the understanding than to the higher emotions. We learn in it to sympathize with what is great and good; we learn to hate what is base. In the anomalies of fortune we feel the mystery of our mortal existence; and in the companionship of the illustrious natures who have shaped the fortunes of the world, we escape from the littlenesses which cling to the round of common life, and our minds are tuned in a higher and nobler key.

For the rest, and for those large questions which I touched in connection with Mr. Buckle, we live in times of disintegration, and none can tell what will be after us. What opinions, what convictions, the infant of to-day will find prevailing on the earth, if he and it live out together to the middle of another century, only a very bold man would undertake to conjecture.

"The time will come," said Lichtenberg, in scorn at the materializing tendencies of modern thought,—"the time will come when the belief in God will be as the tales with which old women frighten children; when the world will be a machine, the ether a gas, and God will be a force." Mankind, if they last long enough on the earth, may develop strange things out of themselves; and the growth of what is called the Positive Philosophy is a curious commentary on Lichtenberg's prophecy. But whether the end be seventy years hence, or seven hundred, —be the close of the mortal history of humanity as far distant in the future as its shadowy beginnings seem now to lie behind us,—this only we may foretell with confidence,—that the riddle of man's nature will remain unsolved. There will be that in him yet which physical laws will fail to explain,—that something, whatever it be, in himself and in the world, which science cannot fathom, and which suggests the unknown possibilities of his origin and his destiny. There will remain yet

> "Those obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things;
> Falling from us, vanishing;
> Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized;

High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

There will remain

" Those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,—
Are yet the master-light of all our seeing,—
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the Eternal Silence."

EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

BORN 1823.

RACE AND LANGUAGE.

BY EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

IT is no very great time since the readers of the English newspapers were, perhaps a little amused, perhaps a little startled, at the story of a deputation of Hungarian students going to Constantinople to present a sword of honor to an Ottoman general. The address and the answer enlarged on the ancient kindred of Turks and Magyars, on the long alienation of the dissevered kinsfolk, on the return of both in these later times to a remembrance of the ancient kindred and to the friendly feelings to which such kindred gave birth. The discourse has a strange sound when we remember the reigns of Sigismund and Wladislaus, when we think of the dark days of Nikopolis and Varna, when we think of Huniades encamped at the foot of Hæmus, and of Belgrade beating back Mahomet the Conqueror from her gates. The Magyar and the Ottoman embracing with the joy of reunited kinsfolk is a sight which cer-

tainly no man would have looked forward to in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. At an earlier time the ceremony might have seemed a degree less wonderful. If a man whose ideas are drawn wholly from the modern map should sit down to study the writings of Constantine Porphyrogennêtos, he would perhaps be startled at finding Turks and Franks spoken of as neighbors, at finding *Turcia* and *Francia*—we must not translate *Τουρκία* and *Φραγγία* by *Turkey* and *France*—spoken of as border-lands. A little study will perhaps show him that the change lies almost wholly in the names and not in the boundaries. The lands are there still, and the frontier between them has shifted much less than one might have looked for in nine hundred years. Nor has there been any great change in the population of the two countries. The Turks and the Franks of the Imperial geographer are there still, in the lands which he calls Turcia and Francia; only we no longer speak of them as Turks and Franks. The Turks of Constantine are Magyars; the Franks of Constantine are Germans. The Magyar students may not unlikely have turned over the Imperial pages, and they may have seen how their forefathers stand described there.

We can hardly fancy that the Ottoman general is likely to have given much time to lore of such a kind. Yet the Ottoman answer was as brim full of ethnological and antiquarian sympathy as the Magyar address. It is hardly to be believed that a Turk, left to himself, would by his own efforts have found out the primeval kindred between Turk and Magyar. He might remember that Magyar exiles had found a safe shelter on Ottoman territory; he might look deep enough into the politics of the present moment to see that the rule of Turk and Magyar alike is threatened by the growth of Slavonic national life. But the idea that Magyar and Turk owe each other any love or any duty, directly on the ground of primeval kindred, is certainly not likely to have presented itself to the untutored Ottoman mind. In short, it sounds, as some one said at the time, rather like the dream of a professor who has run wild with an ethnological craze, than like the serious thought of a practical man of any nation. Yet the Magyar students seem to have meant their address quite seriously. And the Turkish general, if he did not take it seriously, at least thought it wise to shape his answer as if he did. As a piece of practical politics, it

sounds like Frederick Barbarossa threatening to avenge the defeat of Crassus upon Saladin, or like the French of the revolutionary wars making the Pope Pius of those days answerable for the wrongs of Vercingetorix. The thing sounds like comedy, almost like conscious comedy. But it is a kind of comedy which may become tragedy, if the idea from which it springs get so deeply rooted in men's minds as to lead to any practical consequences. As long as talk of this kind does not get beyond the world of hot-headed students, it may pass for a craze. It would be more than a craze, if it should be so widely taken up on either side that the statesmen on either side find it expedient to profess to take it up also.

To allege the real or supposed primeval kindred between Magyars and Ottomans as a ground for political action, or at least for political sympathy, in the affairs of the present moment, is an extreme case—some may be inclined to call it a *reductio ad absurdum*—of a whole range of doctrines and sentiments which have in modern days gained a great power over men's minds. They have gained so great a power that those who may regret their influence cannot afford to despise it. To make any

practical inference from the primeval kindred of Magyar and Turk is indeed pushing the doctrine of race, and of sympathies arising from race, as far as it well can be pushed. Without plunging into any very deep mysteries, without committing ourselves to any dangerous theories in the darker regions of ethnological inquiry, we may perhaps be allowed at starting to doubt whether there is any real primeval kindred between the Ottoman and the Finnish Magyar. It is for those who have gone specially deep into the antiquities of the non-Aryan races to say whether there is or is not. At all events, as far as the great facts of history go, the kindred is of the vaguest and most shadowy kind. It comes to little more than the fact that Magyars and Ottomans are alike non-Aryan invaders who have made their way into Europe within recorded times, and that both have, rightly or wrongly, been called by the name of Turks. These do seem rather slender grounds on which to build up a fabric of national sympathy between two nations, when several centuries of living practical history all pull the other way. It is hard to believe that the kindred of Turk and Magyar was thought of when a Turkish Pasha ruled at Buda. Doubtless

Hungarian Protestants often deemed, and not unreasonably deemed, that the contemptuous toleration of the Moslem Sultan was a lighter yoke than the persecution of the Catholic Emperor. But it was hardly on grounds of primeval kindred that they made the choice. The ethnological dialogue held at Constantinople does indeed sound like ethnological theory run mad. But it is the very wildness of the thing which gives it its importance. The doctrine of race, and of sympathies springing from race, must have taken very firm hold indeed of men's minds before it could be carried out in a shape which we are tempted to call so grotesque as this.

The plain fact is that the new lines of scientific and historical inquiry which have been opened in modern times have had a distinct and deep effect upon the politics of the age. The fact may be estimated in many ways, but its existence as a fact cannot be denied. Not in a merely scientific or literary point of view, but in one strictly practical, the world is not the same world as it was when men had not yet dreamed of the kindred between Sanscrit, Greek, and English, when it was looked on as something of a paradox to hint that there was a

distinction between Celtic and Teutonic tongues and nations. Ethnological and philological researches—I do not forget the distinction between the two, but for the present I must group them together—have opened the way for new national sympathies, new national antipathies, such as would have been unintelligible a hundred years ago. A hundred years ago a man's political likes and dislikes seldom went beyond the range which was suggested by the place of his birth or immediate descent. Such birth or descent made him a member of this or that political community, a subject of this or that prince, a citizen—perhaps a subject—of this or that commonwealth. The political community of which he was a member had its traditional alliances and traditional enmities, and by those alliances and enmities the likes and dislikes of the members of that community were guided. But those traditional alliances and enmities were seldom determined by theories about language or race. The people of this or that place might be discontented under a foreign government; but, as a rule, they were discontented only if subjection to that foreign government brought with it personal oppression, or at least political degradation. Regard or

disregard of some purely local privilege or local feeling went for more than the fact of a government being native or foreign. What we now call the sentiment of nationality did not go for much; what we call the sentiment of race went for nothing at all. Only a few men here and there would have understood the feelings which have led to those two great events of our own time, the political reunion of the German and Italian nations after their long political dissolution. Not a soul would have understood the feelings which have allowed Panslavism to be a great practical agent in the affairs of Europe, and which have made talk about "the Latin race," if not practical, at least possible. Least of all, would it have been possible to give any touch of political importance to what would have then seemed so wild a dream as a primeval kindred between Magyar and Ottoman.

That feelings such as these, and the practical consequences which have flowed from them, are distinctly due to scientific and historical teaching there can, I think, be no doubt. Religious sympathy and purely national sympathy are both feelings of much simpler growth, which need no deep knowledge nor any special teaching. The cry which resounded through

Christendom when the Holy City was taken by the Mussulmans, the cry which resounded through Islam when the same city was taken by the Christians, the spirit which armed England to support French Huguenots and which armed Spain to support French Leaguers, all spring from motives which lie on the surface. Nor need we seek for any explanation but such as lies on the surface for the natural wish for closer union which arose among Germans or Italians who found themselves parted off by purely dynastic arrangements from men who were their countrymen in every thing else. Such a feeling has to strive with the counter-feeling which springs from local jealousies and local dislikes; but it is a perfectly simple feeling, which needs no subtle research either to arouse or to understand it. So, if we draw our illustrations from the events of our own time, there is nothing but what is perfectly simple in the feeling which calls Russia, as the most powerful of Orthodox states, to the help of her Orthodox brethren everywhere, and which calls the members of the Orthodox Church everywhere to look to Russia as their protector. The feeling may have to strive against a crowd of purely political considerations, and by those purely political con-

siderations it may be outweighed. But the feeling is in itself altogether simple and natural. So again, the people of Montenegro and of the neighboring lands in Herzegovina and by the *Bocche* of Cattaro feel themselves countrymen in every sense but the political accident which keeps them asunder. They are drawn together by a tie which every one can understand, by the same tie which would draw together the people of three adjoining English counties, if any strange political action should part them asunder in like manner. The feeling here is that of nationality in the strictest sense, nationality in a purely local or geographical sense. It would exist all the same if Panslavism had never been heard of; it might exist though those who feel it had never heard of the Slavonic race at all. It is altogether another thing when we come to the doctrine of race, and of sympathies founded on race, in the wider sense. Here we have a feeling which professes to bind together, and which as a matter of fact has had a real effect in binding together, men whose kindred to one another is not so obvious at first sight as the kindred of Germans, Italians, or Serbs who are kept asunder by nothing but a purely artificial political boundary. It is a feeling at whose bidding the

call to union goes forth to men whose dwellings are geographically far apart, to men who may have had no direct dealings with one another for years or for ages, to men whose languages, though the scholar may at once see that they are closely akin, may not be so closely akin as to be mutually intelligible for common purposes. A hundred years back the Servian might have cried for help to the Russian on the ground of common Orthodox faith; he would hardly have called for help on the ground of common Slavonic speech and origin. If he had done so, it would have been rather by way of grasping at any chance, however desperate or far-fetched, than as putting forward a serious and well understood claim which he might expect to find accepted and acted on by large masses of men. He might have received help, either out of genuine sympathy springing from community of faith or from the baser thought than he could be made use of as a convenient political tool. He would have got but little help purely on the ground of a community of blood and speech which had had no practical result for ages. When Russia in earlier days interfered between the Turk and his Christian subjects, there is no sign of any sympathy felt or possessed for Slavs as Slavs.

Russia dealt with Montenegro, not, as far as one can see, out of any Slavonic brotherhood, but because an independent Orthodox state at enmity with the Turk could not fail to be a useful ally. The earlier dealings of Russia with the subject nations were far more busy among the Greeks than among the Slavs. In fact, till quite lately, all the Orthodox subjects of the Turk were in most European eyes looked on as alike Greeks. The Orthodox Church has been commonly known as the Greek Church; and it has often been very hard to make people understand that the vast mass of the members of that so-called Greek Church are not Greek in any other sense. In truth we may doubt whether, till comparatively lately, the subject nations themselves were fully alive to the differences of race and speech among them. A man must in all times and places know whether he speaks the same language as another man; but he does not always go on to put his consciousness of difference into the shape of a sharply drawn formula. Still less does he always make the difference the ground of any practical course of action. The Englishman in the first days of the Norman Conquest felt the hardships of foreign rule, and he knew that those hard-

ships were owing to foreign rule. But he had not learned to put his sense of hardship into any formula about an oppressed nationality. So, when the policy of the Turk found that the subtle intellect of the Greek could be made use of as an instrument of dominion over the other subject nations, the Bulgarian felt the hardship of the state of things in which, as it was proverbially said, his body was in bondage to the Turk and his soul in bondage to the Greek. But we may suspect that this neatly turned proverb dates only from the awakening of a distinctly national Bulgarian feeling in modern times. The Turk was felt to be an intruder and an enemy, because his rule was that of an open oppressor belonging to another creed. The Greek, on the other hand, though his spiritual dominion brought undoubted practical evils with it, was not felt to be an intruder and an enemy in the same sense. His quicker intellect and superior refinement made him a model. The Bulgarian imitated the Greek tongue and Greek manners; he was willing in other lands to be himself looked on as a Greek. It is only in quite modern times, under the direct influence of the preaching of the doctrine of race, that a hard and fast line has been drawn be-

tween Greeks and Bulgarians. That doctrine has cut two ways. It has given both nations, Greek and Bulgarian alike, a renewed national life, national strength, national hopes, such as neither of them had felt for ages. In so doing, it has done one of the best and most hopeful works of the age. But in so doing, it has created one of the most dangerous of immediate political difficulties. In calling two nations into a renewed being, it has arrayed them in enmity against each other, and that in the face of a common enemy in whose presence all lesser differences and jealousies ought to be hushed into silence.

There is then a distinct doctrine of race, and of sympathies founded on race, distinct from the feeling of community of religion, and distinct from the feeling of nationality in the narrower sense. It is not so simple or easy a feeling as either of those two. It does not in the same way lie on the surface; it is not in the same way grounded on obvious facts which are plain to every man's understanding. The doctrine of race is essentially an artificial doctrine, a learned doctrine. It is an inference from facts which the mass of mankind could never have found out for themselves; facts which,

without a distinctly learned teaching, could never be brought home to them in any intelligible shape. Now what is the value of such a doctrine? Does it follow that, because it is confessedly artificial, because it springs, not from a spontaneous impulse, but from a learned teaching, it is therefore necessarily foolish, mischievous, perhaps unnatural? It may perhaps be safer to hold that, like many other doctrines, many other sentiments, it is neither universally good nor universally bad, neither inherently wise nor inherently foolish. It may be safer to hold that it may, like other doctrines and sentiments, have a range within which it may work for good, while in some other range it may work for evil. It may in short be a doctrine which is neither to be rashly accepted, nor rashly cast aside, but one which may need to be guided, regulated, modified, according to time, place, and circumstance. I am not now called on so much to estimate the practical good and evil of the doctrine as to work out what the doctrine itself is, and to try to explain some difficulties about it. but I must emphatically say that nothing can be more shallow, nothing more foolish, nothing more purely sentimental, than the talk of those who think that they can simply laugh down or

shriek down any doctrine or sentiment which they themselves do not understand. A belief or a feeling which has a practical effect on the conduct of great masses of men, sometimes on the conduct of whole nations, may be very false and very mischievous; but it is in every case a great and serious fact, to be looked gravely in the face. Men who sit at their ease and think that all wisdom is confined to themselves and their own clique may think themselves vastly superior to the great emotions which stir our times, as they would doubtless have thought themselves vastly superior to the emotions which stirred the first Saracens or the first Crusaders. But the emotions are there all the same, and they do their work all the same. The most highly educated man in the most highly educated society cannot sneer them out of being.

But it is time to pass to the more strictly scientific aspect of the subject. The doctrine of race, in its popular form, is the direct offspring of the study of scientific philology; and yet it is just now, in its popular form at least, somewhat under the ban of scientific philologers. There is nothing very wonderful in this. It is in fact the natural course of things

which might almost have been reckoned on beforehand. When the popular mind gets hold of a truth, it seldom gets hold of it with strict scientific precision. It commonly gets hold of one side of the truth; it puts forth that side of the truth only. It puts that side forth in a form which may not be in itself distorted or exaggerated, but which practically becomes distorted and exaggerated, because other sides of the same truth are not brought into their due relation with it. The popular idea thus takes a shape which is naturally offensive to men of strict precision, and which men of strict scientific precision have naturally, and from their own point of view quite rightly, risen up to rebuke. Yet it may often happen that, while the scientific statement is the only true one for scientific purposes, the popular version may also have a kind of practical truth for the somewhat rough and ready purposes of a popular version. In our present case scientific philologers are beginning to complain, with perfect truth and perfect justice from their own point of view, that the popular doctrine of race confounds race and language. They tell us, and they do right to tell us, that language is no certain test of race, that men who speak the same

tongue are not therefore necessarily men of the same blood. And they tell us further, that from whatever quarter the alleged popular confusion came, it certainly did not come from any teaching of scientific philologers.

The truth of all this cannot be called in question. We have too many instances in recorded history of nations laying aside the use of one language and taking to the use of another, for any one who cares for accuracy to set down language as any sure test of race. In fact, the studies of the philologer and those of the ethnologer strictly so called are quite distinct, and they deal with two wholly different sets of phenomena. The science of the ethnologer is strictly a physical science. He has to deal with purely physical phenomena; his business lies with the different varieties of the human body, and specially, to take that branch of his inquiries which most impresses the unlearned, with the various conformations of the human skull. His researches differ in nothing from those of the zoölogist or the palæontologist, except that he has to deal with the physical phenomena of man, while they deal with the physical phenomena of other animals. He groups the different races of men, exactly as

the others group the genera and species of living or extinct mammals or reptiles. The student of ethnology as a physical science may indeed strengthen his conclusions by evidence of other kinds, evidence from arms, ornaments, pottery, modes of burial. But all these are secondary; the primary ground of classification is the physical conformation of man himself. As to language, the ethnological method, left to itself, can find out nothing whatever. The science of the ethnologer then is primarily physical; it is historical only in that secondary sense in which palæontology, and geology itself, may fairly be called historical. It arranges the varieties of mankind according to a strictly physical classification; what the language of each variety may have been, it leaves to the professors of another branch of study to find out.

The science of the philologer, on the other hand, is strictly historical. There is doubtless a secondary sense in which purely philological science may be fairly called physical, just as there is a secondary sense in which pure ethnology may be called historical. That is to say, philology has to deal with physical phenomena, so far as it has to deal with the physi-

cal aspect of the sounds of which human language is made up. Its primary business, like the primary business of any other historical science, is to deal with phenomena which do not depend on physical laws, but which do depend on the human will. The science of language is, in this respect, like the science of human institutions or of human beliefs. Its subject-matter is not, like that of pure ethnology, what man is, but, like that of any other historical science, what man does. It is plain that no man's will can have any direct influence on the shape of his skull. I say no direct influence, because it is not for me to rule how far habits, places of abode, modes of life, a thousand things which do come under the control of the human will, may indirectly affect the physical conformation of a man himself or of his descendants. Some observers have made the remark that men of civilized nations who live in a degraded social state do actually approach to the physical type of inferior races. However this may be, it is quite certain, that as no man can by taking thought add a cubit to his stature, so no man can by taking thought make his skull brachycephalic or dolichocephalic. But the language which a man speaks

does depend upon his will; he can by taking thought make his speech Romance or Teutonic. No doubt he has in most cases practically no choice in the matter. The language which he speaks is practically determined for him by fashion, habit, early teaching, a crowd of things over which he has practically no control. But still the control is not physical and inevitable, as it is in the case of the shape of his skull. If we say that he cannot help speaking in a particular way; that is, that he cannot help speaking a particular language, this simply means that his circumstances are such that no other way of speaking presents itself to his mind. And in many cases, he has a real choice between two or more ways of speaking; that is, between two or more languages. Every word that a man speaks is the result of a real, though doubtless unconscious, act of his free will. We are apt to speak of gradual changes in language, as in institutions or any thing else, as if they were the result of a physical law, acting upon beings who had no choice in the matter. Yet every change of the kind is simply the aggregate of various acts of the will on the part of all concerned. Every change in speech, every introduction of a new sound or a new word, was

really the result of an act of the will of some one or other. The choice may have been unconscious; circumstances may have been such as practically to give him but one choice; still he did choose; he spoke in one way, when there was no physcial hindrance to his speaking in another way, when there was no physical compulsion to speak at all. The Gauls need not have changed their own language for Latin; the change was not the result of a physical necessity, but of a number of acts of the will on the part of this and that Gaul. Moral causes directed their choice, and determined that Gaul should become a Latin-speaking land. But whether the skulls of the Gauls should be long or short, whether their hair should be black or yellow, those were points over which the Gauls themselves had no direct control whatever.

The study of men's skulls then is a study which is strictly physical, a study of facts over which the will of man has no direct control. The study of men's languages is strictly an historical study, a study of facts over which the will of man has a direct control. It follows therefore from the very nature of the two studies that language cannot be an absolutely certain test of physical descent. A man

cannot, under any circumstances, choose his own skull; he may, under some circumstances, choose his own language. He must keep the skull which has been given him by his parents; he cannot, by any process of taking thought, determine what kind of skull he will hand on to his own children. But he may give up the use of the language which he has learned from his parents, and he may determine what language he will teach to his children. The physical characteristics of a race are unchangeable, or are changed only by influences over which the race itself has no direct control. The language which the race speaks may be changed, either by a conscious act of the will or by that power of fashion which is in truth the aggregate of countless unconscious acts of the will. And, as the very nature of the case thus shows that language is no sure test of race, so the facts of recorded history equally prove the same truth. Both individuals and whole nations do in fact often exchange the language of their forefathers for some other language. A man settles in a foreign country. He learns the language of that country; sometimes he forgets the use of his own language. His children may perhaps speak both tongues; if they speak

one tongue only, it will be the tongue of the country where they live. In a generation or two all trace of foreign origin will have passed away. Here then language is no test of race. If the great-grandchildren speak the language of their great-grandfathers, it will simply be as they may speak any other foreign language. Here are men who by speech belong to one nation, by actual descent to another. If they lose the physical characteristics of the race to which the original settler belonged, it will be due to intermarriage, to climate, to some cause altogether independent of language. Every nation will have some adopted children of this kind, more or fewer; men who belong to it by speech, but who do not belong to it by race. And what happens in the case of individuals happens in the case of whole nations. The pages of history are crowded with cases in which nations have cast aside the tongue of their forefathers, and have taken instead the tongue of some other people. Greek in the East, Latin in the West, became the familiar speech of millions who had not a drop of Greek or Italian blood in their veins. The same has been the case in later times with Arabic, Persian, Spanish, German, English. Each of those

tongues has become the familiar speech of vast regions where the mass of the people are not Arabian, Spanish, or English, otherwise than by adoption. The Briton of Cornwall has, slowly but in the end thoroughly, adopted the speech of England. In the American continent full-blooded Indians preside over commonwealths which speak the tongue of Cortes and Pizarro. In the lands to which all eyes are now turned, the Greek, who has been busily assimilating strangers ever since he first planted his colonies in Asia and Sicily, goes on busily assimilating his Albanian neighbors. And between renegades, janissaries, and mothers of all nations, the blood of many a Turk must be physically any thing rather than Turkish. The inherent nature of the case, and the witness of recorded history, join together to prove that language is no certain test of race, and that the scientific philologers are doing good service to accuracy of expression and accuracy of thought by emphatically calling attention to the fact that language is no such test.

But, on the other hand, it is quite possible that the truth to which our attention is just now most fittingly called may, if put forth too broadly and without certain qualifications, lead

to error quite as great as the error at which it is aimed. I do not suppose that any one ever thought that language was, necessarily and in all cases, an absolute and certain test. If anybody does think so, he has put himself altogether out of court by shutting his eyes to the most manifest facts of the case. But there can be no doubt that many people have given too much importance to language as a test of race. Though they have not wholly forgotten the facts which tell the other way, they have not brought them out with enough prominence. But I can also believe that many people have written and spoken on the subject in a way which cannot be justified from a strictly scientific point of view, but which may have been fully justified from the point of view of the writers and speakers themselves. It may often happen that a way of speaking may not be scientifically accurate, but may yet be quite near enough to the truth for the purposes of the matter in hand. It may, for some practical or even historical purpose, be really more true than the statement which is scientifically more exact. Language is no certain test of race; but if a man, struck by this wholesome warning, should run off into the belief that language

and race have absolutely nothing to do with one another, he had better have gone without the warning. For in such a case the last error would be worse than the first. The natural instinct of mankind connects race and language. It does not assume that language is an infallible test of race; but it does assume that language and race have something to do with one another. It assumes, that though language is not an accurately scientific test of race, yet it is a rough and ready test which does for many practical purposes. To make something more of an exact definition, one might say, that though language is not a test of race, it is, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, a presumption of race; that though it is not a test of race, yet it is a test of something which, for many practical purposes, is the same as race.

Professor Max Müller warned us long ago that we must not speak of a Celtic skull. Mr. Sayce has more lately warned us that we must not infer from community of Aryan speech that there is any kindred in blood between this or that Englishman and this or that Hindoo. And both warnings are scientifically true. Yet any one who begins his studies on these matters with Professor Müller's famous Oxford Essay

will practically come to another way of looking at things. He will fill his mind with a vivid picture of the great Aryan family, as yet one, dwelling in one place, speaking one tongue, having already taken the first steps toward settled society, recognizing the domestic relations, possessing the first rudiments of government and religion, and calling all these first elements of culture by names of which traces still abide here and there among the many nations of the common stock. He will go on to draw pictures equally vivid of the several branches of the family parting off from the primeval home. One great branch he will see going to the south-east, to become the forefathers of the vast, yet isolated colony in the Asiatic lands of Persia and India. He watches the remaining mass sending off wave after wave, to become the forefathers of the nations of historical Europe. He traces out how each branch starts with its own share of the common stock—how the language, the creed, the institutions, once common to all, grow up into different, yet kindred, shapes, among the many parted branches which grew up, each with an independent life and strength of its own. This is what our instructors set before us as the true

origin of nations and their languages. And, in drawing out the picture, we cannot avoid, our teachers themselves do not avoid, the use of words which imply that the strictly family relation, the relation of community of blood, is at the root of the whole matter. We cannot help talking about the family and its branches, about parents, children, brothers, sisters, cousins. The nomenclature of natural kindred exactly fits the case; it fits it so exactly that no other nomenclature could enable us to set forth the case with any clearness. Yet we cannot be absolutely certain that there was any real community of blood in the whole story. We really know nothing of the origin of language or the origin of society. We may make a thousand ingenious guesses; but we cannot prove any of them. It may be that the group which came together, and which formed the primeval society which spoke the primeval Aryan tongue, were not brought together by community of blood, but by some other cause which threw them in one another's way. If we accept the Hebrew genealogies, they need not have had any community of blood nearer than common descent from Adam and Noah. That is, they need not have been all children

of Shem, of Ham, or of Japheth; some children of Shem, some of Ham, and some of Japheth may have been led by some cause to settle together. Or if we believe in independent creations of men, or in the development of men out of mollusks, the whole of the original society need not have been descendants of the same man or the same mollusk. In short, there is no theory of the origin of man which requires us to believe that the primeval Aryans were a natural family; they may have been more like an accidental party of fellow-travellers. And if we accept them as a natural family, it does not follow that the various branches which grew into separate races and nations, speaking separate though kindred languages, were necessarily marked off by more immediate kindred. It may be that there is no nearer kindred in blood between this or that Persian, this or that Greek, this or that Teuton, than the general kindred of all Aryans. For, when this or that party marched off from the common home, it does follow that those who marched off together were necessarily immediate brothers or cousins. The party which grew into Hindoos or Teutons may not have been made up exclusively of one set of near

kinsfolk. Some of the children of the same parents or forefathers may have marched one way, while others marched another way, or stayed behind. We may, if we please, indulge our fancy by conceiving that there may actually be family distinctions older than distinctions of nation and race. It may be that the Gothic *Amali* and the Roman *Æmilii*—I throw out the idea as a mere illustration—were branches of a family which had taken a name before the division of Teuton and Italian. Some of the members of that family may have joined the band of which came the Goths, while other members joined the band of which came the Romans. There is no difference but the length of time to distinguish such a supposed case from the case of an English family, one branch of which settled in the seventeenth century at Boston in Massachusetts, while another branch stayed behind at Boston in Holland. Mr. Sayce says truly that the use of a kindred language does not prove that the Englishman and the Hindoo are really akin in race; for, as he adds, many Hindoos are men of non-Aryan race who have simply learned to speak tongues of Sanscrit origin. He might have gone on to say, with equal truth, that there is no positive certainty that

there was any community in blood among the original Aryan group itself, and that if we admit such community of blood in the original Aryan group, it does not follow that there is any further special kindred between Hindoo and Hindoo or between Englishman and Englishman. The original group may not have been a family, but an artificial union. And if it was a family, those of its members who marched together east or west or north or south may have had no tie of kindred beyond the common cousinship of all.

Now the tendency of this kind of argument is to lead to something a good deal more startling than the doctrine that language is no certain test of race. Its tendency is to go on further, and to show that race is no certain test of community of blood. And this comes pretty nearly to saying that there is no such thing as race at all. For our whole conception of race starts from the idea of community of blood. If the word "race" does not mean community of blood, it is hard to see what it does mean. Yet it is certain that there can be no positive proof of real community of blood, even among those groups of mankind which we instinctively speak of as families and races. It is not merely

that the blood has been mingled in after-times; there is no positive proof that there was any community of blood in the beginning. No living Englishman can prove with absolute certainty that he comes in the male line of any of the Teutonic settlers in Britain in the fifth or sixth centuries. I say in the male line, because any one who is descended from any English king can prove such descent, though he can prove it only through a long and complicated web of female successions. But we may be sure that in no other case can such a pedigree be proved by the kind of proof which lawyers would require to make out the title to an estate or a peerage. The actual forefathers of the modern Englishman may chance to have been, not true-born Angles or Saxons, but Britons, Scots, in later days Frenchmen, Flemings, men of any other nation who learned to speak English and took to themselves English names. But supposing that a man could make out such a pedigree, supposing that he could prove that he came in the male line of some follower of Hengest or Cerdic, he would be no nearer to proving original community of blood either in the particular Teutonic race or in the general Aryan family. If direct evidence is demanded,

we must give up the whole doctrine of families and races, as far as we take language, manners, institutions, any thing but physical conformation, as the distinguishing marks of races and families. That is to say, if we wish never to use any word of whose accuracy we cannot be perfectly certain, we must leave off speaking of races and families at all from any but the purely physical side. We must content ourselves with saying that certain groups of mankind have a common history, that they have languages, creeds, and institutions in common, but that we have no evidence whatever to show how they came to have languages, creeds, and institutions in common. We cannot say for certain what was the tie which brought the members of the original group together, any more than we can name the exact time and the exact place when and where they came together.

We may thus seem to be landed in a howling wilderness of scientific uncertainty. The result of pushing our inquiries so far may seem to be to show that we really know nothing at all. But in truth the uncertainty is no greater than the uncertainty which attends all inquiries in the historical sciences. Though a historical

fact may be recorded in the most trustworthy documents, though it may have happened in our own times, though we may have seen it happen with our own eyes, yet we cannot have the same certainty about it as the mathematician has about the proposition which he proves to absolute demonstration. We cannot have even that lower degree of certainty which the geologist has with regard to the order of succession between this and that *stratum*. For in all historical inquiries we are dealing with facts which themselves come within the control of human will and human caprice, and the evidence for which depends on the trustworthiness of human informants, who may either purposely deceive or unwittingly mislead. A man may lie; he may err. The triangles and the rocks can neither lie nor err. I may with my own eyes see a certain man do a certain act; he may tell me himself, or some one else may tell me, that he is the same man who did some other act; but as to his statement I cannot have absolute certainty, and no one but myself can have absolute certainty as to the statement which I make as to the facts which I saw with my own eyes. Historical evidence may range through every degree, from the

barest likelihood to that undoubted moral certainty on which every man acts without hesitation in practical affairs. But it cannot get beyond this last standard. If, then, we are ever to use words like race, family, or even nation, to denote groups of mankind marked off by any kind of historical, as distinguished from physical, characteristics, we must be content to use those words, as we use many other words, without being able to prove that our use of them is accurate, as mathematicians judge of accuracy. I cannot be quite sure that William the Conqueror landed at Pevensey, though I have strong reasons for believing that he did so. And I have strong reasons for believing many facts about race and language about which I am much further from being quite sure than I am about William's landing at Pevensey. In short, in all these matters, we must be satisfied to let presumption very largely take the place of actual proof; and, if we only let presumption in, most of our difficulties at once fly away. Language is no certain test of race; but it is a presumption of race. Community of race, as we commonly understand race, is no certain proof of original community of blood; but it is a presumption of origi-

nal community of blood. The presumption amounts to moral proof, if only we do not insist on proving such physical community of blood as would satisfy a genealogist. It amounts to moral proof, if all that we seek is to establish a relation in which the community of blood is the leading idea, and in which, where natural community of blood does not exist, its place is supplied by something which by a legal fiction is looked upon as its equivalent.

If, then, we do not ask for scientific, for what we may call physical, accuracy, but if we are satisfied with the kind of proof which is all that we can ever get in the historical sciences—if we are satisfied to speak in a way which is true for popular and practical purposes—then we may say that language has a great deal to do with race, as race is commonly understood, and that race has a great deal to do with community of blood. If we once admit the Roman doctrine of adoption, our whole course is clear. The natural family is the starting-point of every thing; but we must give the natural family the power of artificially enlarging itself by admitting adoptive members. A group of mankind is thus formed, in which it does not

follow that all the members have any natural community of blood, but in which community of blood is the starting-point, in which those who are connected by natural community of blood form the original body within whose circle the artificial members are admitted. A group of mankind thus formed is something quite different from a fortuitious concurrence of atoms. Three or four brothers by blood, with a fourth or fifth man whom they agree to look on as filling in every thing the same place as a brother by blood, form a group which is quite unlike a union of four or five men, none of whom is bound by any tie of blood to any of the others. In the latter kind of union the notion of kindred does not come in at all. In the former kind the notion of kindred is the groundwork of every thing; it determines the character of every relation and every action, even though the kindred between some members of the society and others may be owing to a legal fiction and not to natural descent. All that we know of the growth of tribes, races, nations, leads us to believe that they grew in this way. Natural kindred was the groundwork, the leading and determining idea; but, by one of those legal fictions which have had

such an influence on all institutions, adoption was in certain cases allowed to count as natural kindred.[1]

The usage of all languages shows that community of blood was the leading idea in forming the greater and smaller groups of mankind. Words like *φῦλον, γένος, gens, natio, kin,* all point to the natural family as the origin of all society. The family in the narrower sense, the children of one father in one house, grew into a more extended family, the *gens.* Such were the Alkmaiônidai, the Julii, or the Scyldingas, the real or artificial descendants of a real or supposed forefather. The nature of the *gens* has been set forth often enough. If it is a mistake to fancy that every Julius or Cornelius was the natural kinsman of every other Julius or Cornelius, it is equally a mistake to think that the *gens Julia* or *Cornelia* was in its origin a mere artificial association, into which the idea of natural kindred did not enter. It is indeed possible that really artificial *gentes,* groups of

[1] I am here applying to this particular purpose a line of thought which both myself and others have often applied to other purposes. See, above all, Sir Henry Maine's lecture on "Kinship as the Basis of Society" in the lectures on the "Early History of Institutions"; I would refer also to my own lecture on "The State" in "Comparative Politics."

men of whom it might chance that none were natural kinsmen, were formed in later times after the model of the original *gentes*. Still such imitation would bear witness to the original conception of the *gens*. It would be the doctrine of adoption turned the other way; instead of a father adopting a son, a number of men would agree to adopt a common father. The family then grew into the *gens;* the union of *gentes* formed the state, the political community, which in its first form was commonly a tribe. Then came the nation, formed of a union of tribes. Kindred, real or artificial, is the one basis on which all society and all government has grown up.

Now it is plain, that as soon as we admit the doctrine of artificial kindred—that is, as soon as we allow the exercise of the law of adoption, physical purity of race is at an end. Adoption treats a man as if he were the son of a certain father; it cannot really make him the son of that father. If a brachycephalic father adopts a dolichocephalic son, the legal act cannot change the shape of the adopted son's skull. I will not undertake to say whether, not indeed the rite of adoption, but the influences and circumstances which would spring from it, might

not, in the course of generations, affect even the skull of the man who entered a certain *gens*, tribe, or nation by artificial adoption only. If by any chance the adopted son spoke a different language from the adopted father, the rite of adoption itself would not of itself change his language. But it would bring him under influences which would make him adopt the language of his new *gens* by a conscious act of the will, and which would make his children adopt it by the same unconscious act of the will by which each child adopts the language of his parents. The adopted son, still more the son of the adopted son, became, in speech, in feelings, in worship, in every thing but physical descent, one with the *gens* into which he was adopted. He became one of that *gens* for all practical, political, historical, purposes. It is only the physiologist who could deny his right to his new position. The nature of the process is well expressed by a phrase of our own law. When the nation—the word itself keeps about it the remembrance of birth as the groundwork of every thing—adopts a new citizen, that is, a new child of the state, he is said to be *naturalized*. That is, a legal process puts him in the same position, and gives him the same rights,

as a man who is a citizen and a son by birth. It is assumed that the rights of citizenship come by nature—that is, by birth. The stranger is admitted to them only by a kind of artificial birth; he is naturalized by law; his children are in a generation or two naturalized in fact. There is now no practical distinction between the Englishman whose forefathers landed with William, or even between the Englishman whose forefathers sought shelter from Alva or from Louis the Fourteenth, and the Englishman whose forefathers landed with Hengest. It is for the physiologist to say whether any difference can be traced in their several skulls; for all practical purposes, historical or political, all distinction between these several classes has passed away.

We may, in short, say that the law of adoption runs through every thing, and that it may be practised on every scale. What adoption is at the hands of the family, naturalization is at the hands of the state. And the same process extends itself from adopted or naturalized individuals to large classes of men, indeed to whole nations. When the process takes place on this scale, we may best call it assimilation. Thus Rome assimilated the continental nations of

Western Europe to that degree that, allowing for a few survivals here and there, not only Italy, but Gaul and Spain, became Roman. The people of those lands, admitted step by step to the Roman franchise, adopted the name and tongue of Romans. It must soon have been hard to distinguish the Roman colonist in Gaul or Spain from the native Gaul or Spaniard who had, as far as in him lay, put on the guise of a Roman. This process of assimilation has gone on everywhere and at all times. When two nations come in this way into close contact with one another, it depends on a crowd of circumstances which shall assimilate the other, or whether they shall remain distinct without assimilation either way. Sometimes the conquerors assimilate their subjects; sometimes they are assimilated by their subjects; sometimes conquerors and subjects remain distinct forever. When assimilation either way does take place, the direction which it takes in each particular case will depend, partly on their respective numbers, partly on their degrees of civilization. A small number of less civilized conquerors will easily be lost among a greater number of more civilized subjects, and that even though they give their name to the land

and people which they conquer. The modern Frenchman represents, not the conquering Frank, but the conquered Gaul, or, as he called himself, the conquered Roman. The modern Bulgarian represents, not the Finnish conqueror, but the conquered Slav. The modern Russian represents, not the Scandinavian ruler, but the Slav who sent for the Scandinavian to rule over him. And so we might go on with endless other cases. The point is that the process of adoption, naturalization, assimilation, has gone on everywhere. No nation can boast of absolute purity of blood, though no doubt some nations come much nearer to it than others. When I speak of purity of blood, I leave out of sight the darker questions which I have already raised with regard to the groups of mankind in days before recorded history. I assume great groups like Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic, as having what we may call a real corporate existence, however we may hold that that corporate existence began. My present point is that no existing nation is, in the physiologist's sense of purity, purely Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic, or any thing else. All races have assimilated a greater or less amount of foreign elements. Taking this standard, one

which comes more nearly within the range of our actual knowledge than the possibilities of unrecorded times, we may again say that, from the purely scientific or physiological point of view, not only is language no test of race, but that, at all events among the great nations of the world, there is no such thing as purity of race at all.

But, while we admit this truth, while we even insist upon it from the strictly scientific point of view, we must be allowed to look at it with different eyes from a more practical standing point. This is the standing point, whether of history which is the politics of the past, or of politics which are the history of the present. From this point of view, we may say unhesitatingly that there are such things as races and nations, and that to the grouping of those races and nations language is the best guide. We cannot undertake to define with any philosophical precision the exact distinction between race and race, between nation and nation. Nor can we undertake to define with the like precision in what way the distinctions between race and race, between nation and nation, began. But all analogy leads us to believe that tribes, nations, races, were all formed according to the

original model of the family, the family which starts from the idea of the community of blood, but which allows artificial adoption to be its legal equivalent. In all cases of adoption, naturalization, assimilation, whether of individuals or of large classes of men, the adopted person or class is adopted into an existing community. Their adoption undoubtedly influences the community into which they are adopted. It at once destroys any claim on the part of that community to purity of blood, and it influences the adopting community in many ways, physical and moral. A family, a tribe, or a nation, which has largely recruited itself by adopted members, cannot be the same as one which has never practised adoption at all, but all whose members come of the original stock. But the influence which the adopting community exercises upon its adopted members is far greater than any influence which they exercise upon it. It cannot change their blood; it cannot give them new natural forefathers; but it may do every thing short of this; it may make them, in speech, in feeling, in thought, and in habit, genuine members of the community which has artificially made them its own. While there is not in any nation, in any race, any such thing

as strict purity of blood, yet there is in each nation, in each race, a dominant element—or rather something more than an element—something which is the true essence of the race or nation, something which sets its standard and determines its character, something which draws to itself and assimilates to itself all other elements. It so works that all other elements are not co-equal elements with itself, but mere infusions poured into an already existing body. Doubtless these infusions do in some measure influence the body which assimilates them; but the influence which they exercise is as nothing compared to the influence which they undergo. We may say that they modify the character of the body into which they are assimilated; they do not affect its personality. Thus, assuming the great groups of mankind as primary facts, the origin of which lies beyond our certain knowledge, we may speak of families and races, of the great Aryan family and of the races into which it parted, as groups which have a real, practical existence, as groups founded on the ruling primeval idea of kindred, even though in many cases the kindred may not be by natural descent, but only by law of adoption. The Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic races of man are

real living and abiding groups, the distinction between which we must accept among the primary facts of history. And they go on as living and abiding groups, even though we know that each of them has assimilated many adopted members, sometimes from other branches of the Aryan family, sometimes from races of men alien to the whole Aryan stock. These races which, in a strictly physiological point of view, have no existence at all, have a real existence from the more practical point of view of history and politics. The Bulgarian calls to the Russian for help, and the Russian answers to his call for help, on the ground of their being alike members of the one Slavonic race. It may be that, if we could trace out the actual pedigree of this or that Bulgarian, of this or that Russian, we might either find that there was no real kindred between them, or we might find that there was a real kindred, but a kindred which must be traced up to another stock than that of the Slav. In point of actual blood, instead of both being Slavs, it may be that one of them comes, it may be that both of them come, of a stock which is not Slavonic or even Aryan. The Bulgarian may chance to be a Bulgarian in a truer sense than he thinks for; he may come

of the blood of those original Finnish conquerors who gave the Bulgarian name to the Slavs among whom they were merged. And if this or that Bulgarian may chance to come of the stock of Finnish conquerors assimilated by their Slavonic subjects, this or that Russian may chance to come of the stock of Finnish subjects assimilated by their Slavonic conquerors. It may then so happen that the cry for help goes up and is answered on a ground of kindred which in the eye of the physiologist has no existence. Or it may happen that the kindred is real in a way which neither the suppliant nor his helper thinks of. But in either case, for the practical purposes of human life, the plea is a good plea; the kindred on which it is founded is a real kindred. It is good by the law of adoption. It is good by the law the force of which we all admit whenever we count a man as an Englishman whose forefathers, two generations or twenty generations back, came to our shores as strangers. For all practical purposes, for all the purposes which guide men's actions, public or private, the Russian and the Bulgarian, kinsmen so long parted, perhaps in very truth no natural kinsmen at all, are members of the same race, bound together by the

common sentiment of race. They belong to the same race, exactly as an Englishman whose forefathers came into Britain fourteen hundred years back, and an Englishman whose forefathers came only one or two hundred years back, are alike members of the same nation, bound together by a tie of common nationality.

And now, having ruled that races and nations, though largely formed by the working of an artificial law, are still real and living things, groups in which the idea of kindred is the idea around which every thing has grown, how are we to define our races and our nations? How are we to mark them off one from the other? Bearing in mind the cautions and qualifications which have been already given, bearing in mind large classes of exceptions which will presently be spoken of, I say unhesitatingly that for practical purposes there is one test, and one only, and that that test is language. It is hardly needful to show that races and nations cannot be defined by the merely political arrangements which group men under various governments. For some purposes of ordinary language, for some purposes of ordinary politics, we are tempted, sometimes driven, to take this standard. And in some parts of the world,

in our own Western Europe for instance, nations and governments do, in a rough way, fairly answer to one another. And, in any case, political divisions are not without their influence on the formation of national divisions, while national divisions ought to have the greatest influence on political divisions. That is to say, *primâ facie* a nation and government should coincide. I say only *primâ facie;* for this is assuredly no inflexible rule; there are often good reasons why it should be otherwise; only, whenever it is otherwise, there should be some good reason forthcoming. It might even be true that in no case did a government and a nation exactly coincide, and yet it would none the less be the rule that a government and a nation should coincide. That is to say, so far as a nation and a government coincide, we accept it as the natural state of things, and ask no question as to the cause. So far as they do not coincide, we mark the case as exceptional, by asking what is the cause. And by saying that a government and a nation should coincide we mean that, as far as possible, the boundaries of governments should be so laid out as to agree with the boundaries of nations. That is, we assume the nation as something al-

ready existing, something primary, to which the secondary arrangements of government should, as far as possible, conform. How then do we define the nation, which is, if there is no especial reason to the contrary, to fix the limits of a government? Primarily, I say, as a rule, but a rule subject to exceptions,—as a *primâ facie* standard, subject to special reasons to the contrary,—we define the nation by language. We may at least apply the test negatively. It would be unsafe to rule that all speakers of the same language must have a common nationality; but we may safely say that where there is not community of language, there is no common nationality in the highest sense. It is true that without community of language there may be an artificial nationality, a nationality which may be good for all political purposes, and which may engender a common national feeling. Still this is not quite the same thing as that fuller national unity which is felt where there is community of language. In fact mankind instinctively takes language as the badge of nationality. We so far take it as the badge, that we instinctively assume community of language as a nation as the rule, and we set down any thing that departs from that rule as

an exception. The first idea suggested by the word Frenchman or German or any other national name, is that he is a man who speaks French or German as his mother-tongue. We take for granted, in the absence of any thing to make us think otherwise, that a Frenchman is a speaker of French and that a speaker of French is a Frenchman. Where in any case it is otherwise, we mark that case as an exception, and we ask the special cause. Again, the rule is none the less the rule, nor the exceptions the exceptions, because the exceptions may easily outnumber the instances which conform to the rule. The rule is still the rule, because we take the instances which conform to it as a matter of course, while in every case which does not conform to it we ask for the explanation. All the larger countries of Europe provide us with exceptions; but we treat them all as exceptions. We do not ask why a native of France speaks French. But when a native of France speaks as his mother-tongue some other tongue than French, when French, or something which popularly passes for French, is spoken as his mother-tongue by some one who is not a native of France, we at once ask the reason. And the reason will be found in each

case in some special historical cause which withdraws that case from the operation of the general law. A very good reason can be given why French, or something which popularly passes for French, is spoken in parts of Belgium and Switzerland whose inhabitants are certainly not Frenchmen. But the reason has to be given, and it may fairly be asked.

In the like sort, if we turn to our own country, whenever within the bounds of Great Britain we find any tongue spoken other than English, we at once ask the reason and we learn the special historic cause. In a part of France and a part of Great Britain we find tongues spoken which differ alike from English and from French, but which are strongly akin to one another. We find that these are the survivals of a group of tongues once common to Gaul and Britain, but which the settlement of other nations, the introduction and the growth of other tongues, have brought down to the level of survivals. So again we find islands which both speech and geographical position seem to mark as French, but which are dependencies, and loyal dependencies, of the English crown. We soon learn the cause of the phenomenon which seems so strange. Those

islands are the remains of a state and a people which adopted the French tongue, but which, while it remained one, did not become a part of the French state. That people brought England by force of arms under the rule of their own sovereigns. The greater part of that people were afterward conquered by France, and gradually became French in feeling as well as in language. But a remnant clave to their connection with the land which their forefathers had conquered, and that remnant, while keeping the French tongue, never became French in feeling. This last case, that of the Norman islands, is a specially instructive one. Normandy and England were politically connected, while language and geography pointed rather to a union between Normandy and France. In the case of continental Normandy, where the geographical tie was strongest, language and geography together could carry the day, and the continental Norman became a Frenchman. In the islands, where the geographical tie was less strong, political traditions and manifest interest carried the day against language and a weaker geographical tie. The insular Norman did not become a Frenchman. But neither did he become an Englishman. He alone remained

Norman, keeping his own tongue and his own laws, but attached to the English crown by a tie at once of tradition and of advantage. Between states of the relative size of England and the Norman islands, the relation naturally becomes a relation of dependence on the part of the smaller members of the union. But it is well to remember that our forefathers never conquered the forefathers of the men of the Norman islands, but that their forefathers did once conquer ours.

These instances, and countless others, bear out the position that, while community of language is the most obvious sign of common nationality, while it is the main element, or something more than an element, in the formation of nationality, the rule is open to exceptions of all kinds, and that the influence of language is at all times liable to be overruled by other influences. But all the exceptions confirm the rule, because we specially remark those cases which contradict the rule, and we do not specially remark those cases which do not conform to it.

In the cases which we have just spoken of, the growth of the nation as marked out by language, and the growth of the exceptions to

the rule of language, have both come through the gradual, unconscious working of historical causes. Union under the same government, or separation under separate governments, have been among the foremost of those historical causes. The French nation consists of the people of all that extent of continuous territory which has been brought under the rule of the French kings. But the working of the cause has been gradual and unconscious. There was no moment when any one deliberately proposed to form a French nation by joining together all the separate duchies and counties which spoke the French tongue. Since the French nation has been formed, men have proposed to annex this or that land on the ground that its people spoke the French tongue, or perhaps only some tongue akin to the French tongue. But the formation of the French nation itself was the work of historical causes, the work doubtless of a settled policy acting through many generations, but not the work of any conscious theory about races and languages. It is a special mark of our time, a special mark of the influence which doctrines about race and language have had on men's minds, that we have seen great nations united by processes in

which theories of race and language really have had much to do with bringing about their union. If statesmen have not been themselves moved by such theories, they have at least found that it suited their purpose to make use of such theories as a means of working on the minds of others. In the reunion of the severed German and Italian nations, the conscious feeling of nationality, and the acceptance of a common language as the outward badge of nationality, had no small share. Poets sang of language as the badge of national union ; statesmen made it the badge, so far as political considerations did not lead them to do any thing else. The revived kingdom of Italy is very far from taking in all the speakers of the Italian tongue. Lugano, Trent, Aquileia—to take places which are clearly Italian, and not to bring in places of more doubtful nationality, like the cities of Istria and Dalmatia—form no part of the Italian political body, and Corsica is not under the same rule as the other two great neighboring islands. But the fact that all these places do not belong to the Italian body at once suggests the twofold question, why they do not belong to it, and whether they ought not to belong to it. History easily answers the

first question ; it may perhaps also answer the second question in a way which will say Yes as regards one place and No as regards another. Ticino must not lose her higher freedom ; Trieste must remain the needful mouth for southern Germany ; Dalmatia must not be cut off from the Slavonic mainland ; Corsica would seem to have sacrificed national feeling to personal hero-worship. But it is certainly hard to see why Trent and Aquileia should be kept apart from the Italian body. On the other hand, the revived Italian kingdom contains very little which is not Italian in speech. It is perhaps by a somewhat elastic view of language that the dialect of Piedmont and the dialect of Sicily are classed under one head ; still, as a matter of fact, they have a single classical standard, and they are universally accepted as varieties of the same tongue. But it is only in a few Alpine valleys that languages are spoken which, whether Romance or Teutonic, are in any case not Italian. The reunion of Italy, in short, took in all that was Italian, save when some political cause hindered the rule of language from being followed. Of any thing not Italian by speech so little has been taken in that the non-Italian parts of

Italy, Burgundian Aosta and the Seven German Communes—if these last still keep their Teutonic language,—fall under the rule that there are some things too small for laws to pay heed to.

But it must not be forgotten that all this simply means that in the lands of which we have just been speaking the process of adoption has been carried out on the largest scale. Nations, with languages as their rough practical test, have been formed; but they have been formed with very little regard to physical purity of blood. In short, throughout Western Europe assimilation has been the rule. That is to say, in any of the great divisions of Western Europe, though the land may have been settled and conquered over and over again, yet the mass of the people of the land have been drawn to some one national type. Either some one among the races inhabiting the land has taught the others to put on its likeness, or else a new national type has arisen which has elements drawn from several of those races. Thus the modern Frenchman may be defined as produced by the union of blood which is mainly Celtic with a speech which is mainly Latin, and with an historical polity which is mainly Teu-

tonic. That is, he is neither Gaul, Roman, nor Frank, but a fourth type which has drawn important elements from all three. Within modern France this new national type has so far assimilated all others as to make every thing else merely exceptional. The Fleming of one corner, the Basque of another, even the far more important Breton of a third corner, have all in this way become mere exceptions to the general type of the country. If we pass into our own islands, we shall find that the same process has been at work. If we look to Great Britain only, we shall find that, though the means have not been the same, yet the end has been gained hardly less thoroughly than in France. For all real political purposes, for every thing which concerns a nation in the face of other nations, Great Britain is as thoroughly united as France is. Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, feel themselves one people in the general affairs of the world. A secession of Scotland or Wales is as unlikely as a secession of Normandy or Languedoc. The part of the island which is not thoroughly assimilated in language, that part which still speaks Welsh or Gaelic, is larger in proportion than the non-French part of modern France. But however

much either the northern or the western Briton may, in a fit of antiquarian politics, declaim against the Saxon, for all practical political purposes he and the Saxon are one. The distinction between the southern and the northern English—for the men of Lothian and Fife must allow me to call them by this last name—is, speaking politically and without ethnological or linguistic precision, much as if France and Aquitaine had been two kingdoms united on equal terms, instead of Aquitaine being merged in France. When we cross into Ireland, we indeed find another state of things, and one which comes nearer to some of the phenomena which we shall come to in other parts of the world. Ireland is, most unhappily, not so firmly united to Great Britain as the different parts of Great Britain are to one another. Still even here the division arises quite as much from geographical and historical causes as from distinctions of race strictly so called. If Ireland had had no wrongs, still two great islands can never be so thoroughly united as a continuous territory can be. On the other hand, in point of language, the discontented part of the United Kingdom is much less strongly marked off than that fraction of the contented part which is not

thoroughly assimilated. Irish is certainly not the language of Ireland in at all the same degree in which Welsh is the language of Wales. The Saxon has commonly to be denounced in the Saxon tongue.

In some other parts of Western Europe, as in the Spanish and Scandinavian peninsulas, the coincidence of language and nationality is stronger than it is in France, Britain, or even Italy. No one speaks Spanish except in Spain or in the colonies of Spain. And within Spain the proportion of those who do not speak Spanish, namely the Basque remnant, is smaller than the non-assimilated element in Britain and France. Here two things are to be marked: First, the modern Spanish nation has been formed, like the French, by a great process of assimilation; secondly, the actual national arrangements of the Spanish peninsula are wholly due to historical causes, we might almost say historical accidents, and those of very recent date. Spain and Portugal are separate kingdoms, and we look on their inhabitants as forming separate nations. But this is simply because a Queen of Castile in the fifteenth century married a King of Aragon. Had Isabel married a King of Portugal, we should now

talk of Spain and Aragon as we now talk of Spain and Portugal, and we should count Portugal for part of Spain. In language, in history, in every thing else, Aragon was really more distinct from Castile than Portugal was. The King of Castile was already spoken of as King of Spain, and Portugal would have merged in the Spanish kingdom at last as easily as Aragon did. In Scandinavia, on the other hand, there must have been less assimilation than anywhere else. In the present kingdoms of Norway and Sweden, there must be a nearer approach to actual purity of blood than in any other part of Europe. One cannot fancy that much Finnish blood has been assimilated, and there have been no conquests or settlements later than that of the Northmen themselves.

When we pass into Central Europe we shall find a somewhat different state of things. The distinctions of race seem to be more lasting. While the national unity of the German Empire is greater than that of either France or Great Britain, it has not only subjects of other languages, but actually discontented subjects, in three corners, on its French, its Danish, and its Polish frontiers. We ask the reason, and it

will be at once answered that the discontent of all three is the result of recent conquest, in two cases of very recent conquest indeed. But this is one of the very points to be marked; the strong national unity of the German Empire has been largely the result of assimilation; and these three parts, where recent conquest has not yet been followed by assimilation, are chiefly important because, in all three cases, the discontented territory is geographically continuous with a territory of its own speech outside the Empire. This does not prove that assimilation can never take place; but it will undoubtedly make the process longer and harder.

So again, wherever German-speaking people dwell outside the bounds of the revived German state, as well as when that revived German state contains other than German-speaking people, we ask the reason and we can find it. Political reasons forbade the immediate annexation of Austria, Tyrol, and Salzburg. Combined political and geographical reasons, and, if we look a little deeper, ethnological reasons too, forbade the annexation of Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia. Some reason or other will, it may be hoped, always be found to

hinder the annexation of lands which, like Zürich and Bern, have reached a higher political level. Outlying brethren in Transsilvania or at Saratof again come under the rule "De minimis non curat lex." In all these cases the rule that nationality and language should go together, yields to unavoidable circumstances. But, on the other hand, where French or Danish or Slavonic or Lithuanian is spoken within the bounds of the new Empire, the principle that language is the badge of nationality, that without community of language nationality is imperfect, shows itself in another shape. One main object of modern policy is to bring these exceptional districts under the general rule by spreading the German language in them. Everywhere, in short, wherever a power is supposed to be founded on nationality, the common feeling of mankind instinctively takes language as the test of nationality. We assume language as the test of a nation, without going into any minute questions as to the physical purity of blood in that nation. A continuous territory, living under the same government and speaking the same tongue, forms a nation for all practical purposes. If some of its inhabitants do not belong to the

original stock by blood, they at least belong to it by adoption.

The question may now fairly be asked, What is the case in those parts of the world where people who are confessedly of different races and languages inhabit a continuous territory and live under the same government? How do we define nationality in such cases as these? The answer will be very different in different cases, according to the means by which the different national elements in such a territory have been brought together. They may form what I have already called an artificial nation, united by an act of its own free will. Or it may be simply a case where distinct nations, distinct in every thing which can be looked on as forming a nation, except the possession of an independent government, are brought together, by whatever causes, under a common ruler. The former case is very distinctly an exception which proves the rule, and the latter is, though in quite another way, an exception which proves the rule also. Both cases may need somewhat more in the way of definition. We will begin with the first, the case of a nation which has been formed out of elements which differ in language, but which still have been brought together so

as to form an artificial nation. In the growth of the chief nations of Western Europe, the principle which was consciously or unconsciously followed has been that the nation should be marked out by language, and the use of any tongue other than the dominant tongue of the nation should be at least exceptional. But there is one nation in Europe, one which has a full right to be called a nation in a political sense, which has been formed on the directly opposite principle. The Swiss Confederation has been formed by the union of certain detached fragments of the German, Italian, and Burgundian nations. It may indeed be said that the process has been in some sort a process of adoption, that the Italian and Burgundian elements have been incorporated into an already existing German body; that, as those elements were once subjects or dependents or protected allies, the case is one of clients or freedmen who have been admitted to the full privileges of the *gens*. This is undoubtedly true, and it is equally true of a large part of the German element itself. Throughout the Confederation, allies and subjects have been raised to the rank of confederates. But the former position of the component elements does not matter for our purpose.

As a matter of fact, the foreign dependencies have all been admitted into the Confederation on equal terms. German is undoubtedly the language of a great majority of the Confederation; but the two recognized Romance languages are each the speech, not of a mere fragment or survival, like Welsh in Britain or Breton in France, but of a large minority forming a visible element in the general body. The three languages are all of them alike recognized as national languages, though, as if to keep up the universal rule that there should be some exceptions to all rules, a fourth language still lives on within the bounds of the Confederation, which is not admitted to the rights of the other three, but is left in the state of a fragment or a survival.[1] Is such an artificial body as this to be called a nation? It is plainly not a nation by blood or by speech. It can hardly be called a nation by adoption. For, if we choose to say

[1] While the Swiss Confederation recognizes German, French, and Italian as all alike national languages, the independent Romance language, which is still used in some parts of the Canton of Graubünden, that which is known specially as *Romansch*, is not recognized. It is left in the same position in which Welsh and Gaelic are left in Great Britain, in which Basque, Breton, Provençal, Walloon, and Flemish are left within the borders of that French kingdom which has grown so as to take them all in.

that the three elements have all agreed to adopt one another as brethren, yet it has been adoption without assimilation. Yet surely the Swiss Confederation is a nation. It is not a a mere power, in which various nations are brought together, whether willingly or unwillingly, under a common ruler, but without any further tie of union. For all political purposes, the Swiss Confederation is a nation, a nation capable of as strong and true national feeling as any other nation. Yet it is a nation purely artificial, one in no way defined by blood or speech. It thus proves the rule in two ways. We at once feel that this artificially formed nation, which has no common language, but each of whose elements speaks a language common to itself with some other nation, is something different from those nations which are defined by a universal or at least a predominant language. We mark it as an exception, as something different from other cases. And when we see how nearly this artificial nation comes, in every point but that of language, to the likeness of those nations which are defined by language, we see that it is a nation defined by language which sets the standard, and after the model of which the artificial nation forms itself. The

case of the Swiss Confederation and its claim to rank as a nation would be like the case of those *gentes*, if any such there were, which did not spring even from the expansion of an original family, but which were artificially formed in imitation of those which did, and which, instead of a real or traditional forefather, chose for themselves an adopted one.

In the Swiss Confederation, then, we have a case of a nation formed by an artificial process, but which still is undoubtely a nation in the face of other nations. We now come to the other class, in which nationality and language keep the connection which they have elsewhere, but in which nations do not even in the roughest way answer to governments. We have only to go into the Eastern lands of Europe to find a state of things in which the notion of nationality, as marked out by language and national feeling, has altogether parted company from the notion of political government. It must be remembered that this state of things is not confined to the nations which are or have lately been under the yoke of the Turk. It extends also to the nations or fragments of nations which make up the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. In all the lands held by these two

powers we come across phenomena of geography, race, and language, which stand out in marked contrast with any thing to which we are used in Western Europe. We may perhaps better understand what those phenomena are, if we suppose a state of things which sounds absurd in the West, but which has its exact parallel in many parts of the East. Let us suppose that in a journey through England we came successively to districts, towns, or villages, where we found, one after another, first, Britons speaking Welsh; then Romans speaking Latin; then Saxons or Angles speaking an older form of our own tongue; then Scandinavians speaking Danish; then Normans speaking Old-French; lastly perhaps a settlement of Flemings, Huguenots, or Palatines, still remaining a distinct people and speaking their own tongue. Or let us suppose a journey through Northern France, in which we found at different stages, the original Gaul, the Roman, the Frank, the Saxon of Bayeux, the Dane of Coutances, each remaining a distinct people, each of them keeping the tongue which they first brought with them into the land. Let us suppose further that, in many of these cases, a religious distinction was added to a national distinction.

Let us conceive one village Roman Catholic, another Anglican, others Nonconformist of various types, even if we do not call up any remnants of the worshippers of Jupiter or of Woden. All this seems absurd in any Western country, and absurd enough it is. But the absurdity of the West is the living reality of the East. There we may still find all the chief races which have ever occupied the country, still remaining distinct, still keeping separate tongues, and those for the most part, their own original tongues. Within the present and late European dominions of the Turk, the original races, those whom we find there at the first beginnings of history, are all there still, and two of them keep their original tongues. They form three distinct nations. First of all there are the Greeks. We have not here to deal with them as the representatives of that branch of the Roman Empire which adopted their speech, but simply as one of the original elements in the population of the Eastern peninsula. Known almost down to our own day by their historical name of Romans, they have now fallen back on the name of Hellênes. And to that name they have a perfectly good claim. If the modern Greeks are not all true Hellênes,

they are an aggregate of adopted Hellênes gathered round and assimilated to a true Hellenic kernel. Here we see the oldest recorded inhabitants of a large part of the land abiding, and abiding in a very different case from the remnants of the Celt and the Iberian in Western Europe. The Greeks are no survival of a nation; they are a true and living nation, a nation whose importance is quite out of its proportion to its extent in mere numbers. They still abide, the predominant race in their own ancient and again independent land, the predominant race in those provinces of the continental Turkish dominion which formed part of their ancient land, the predominant race through all the shores and islands of the Ægæan and of part of the Euxine also. In near neighborhood to the Greeks still live another race of equal antiquity, the Skipetar or Albanians. These, as I believe is no longer doubted, represent the ancient Illyrians. The exact degree of their ethnical kindred with the Greeks is a scientific question which need not here be considered; but the facts that they are more largely intermingled with the Greeks than any of the other neighboring nations, that they show a special power of identifying themselves

with the Greeks, a power, so to speak, of becoming Greeks and making part of the artificial Greek nation, are matters of practical history. It must never be forgotten, that among the worthies of the Greek War of Independence, some of the noblest were not of Hellenic but Albanian blood. The Orthodox Albanian easily turns into a Greek; and the Mahometan Albanian is something which is broadly distinguished from a Turk. He has, as he well may have, a strong national feeling, and that national feeling has sometimes got the better of religious divisions. If Albania is among the most backward parts of the peninsula, still it is, by all accounts, the part where there is most hope of men of different religions joining together against the common enemy.

Here then are two ancient races, the Greeks and another race, not indeed so advanced, so important, or so widely spread, but a race which equally keeps a real national being. There is also a third ancient race which survives as a distinct people, though they have for ages adopted a foreign language. These are the Vlachs or Roumans, the surviving representatives of the great race, call it Thracian or any other, which at the beginning of history held the great

inland mass of the Eastern peninsula, with the Illyrians to the west of them and the Greeks to the south. Every one knows, that in the modern principality of Roumania and in the adjoining parts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, there is to be seen that phenomenon so unique in the East, a people who not only, as the Greeks did till lately, still keep the Roman name, but who speak neither Greek nor Turkish, neither Slav nor Skipetar, but a dialect of Latin, a tongue akin, not to the tongues of any of their neighbors, but to the tongues of Gaul, Italy, and Spain. And any one who has given any real attention to this matter knows that the same race is to be found, scattered here and there, if in some parts only as wandering shepherds, in the Slavonic, Albanian, and Greek lands south of the Danube. The assumption has commonly been that this outlying Romance people owe their Romance character to the Roman colonization of Dacia under Trajan. In this view, the modern Roumans would be the descendants of Trajan's colonists and of Dacians who had learned of them to adopt the speech and manners of Rome. But when we remember that Dacia was the first Roman province to be given up—

that the modern Roumania was for ages the highway of every barbarian tribe on its way from the East to the West—that the land has been conquered and settled and forsaken over and over again,—it would be passing strange if this should be the one land, and its people the one race, to keep the Latin tongue when it has been forgotten in all the neighboring countries. In fact, this idea has been completely dispersed by modern research. The establishment of the Roumans in Dacia is of comparatively recent date, beginning only in the thirteenth century. The Roumans of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transsilvania, are isolated from the scattered Rouman remnant on Pindos and elsewhere. They represent that part of the inhabitants of the peninsula which became Latin, while the Greeks remained Greek, and the Illyrians remained barbarian. Their lands, Mœsia, Thrace specially so called, and Dacia, were added to the empire at various times from Augustus to Trajan. That they should gradually adopt the Latin language is in no sort wonderful. Their position with regard to Rome was exactly the same as that of Gaul and Spain. Where Greek civilization had been firmly established, Latin

could nowhere displace it. Where Greek civilization was unknown, Latin overcame the barbarian tongue. It would naturally do so in this part of the East exactly as it did in the West.[1]

Here then we have in the Southeastern peninsula three nations which have all lived on to all appearances from the very beginnings of European history, three distinct nations, speaking three distinct languages. We have nothing answering to this in the West. It needs no proof that the speakers of Celtic and Basque in Gaul and in Spain do not hold the same position in Western Europe which the Greeks, Albanians, and Roumans do in Eastern Europe. In the East the most ancient inhabitants of the land are still there, not as scraps or survivals, not as fragments of nations lingering on in corners, but as nations in the strictest sense, nations whose national being forms an element in every modern and political question. They all have their memories, their grievances, and their hopes; and their memories, their grievances, and their hopes are all of a practical and political kind. Highlanders, Welshmen, Bretons,

[1] On Rouman history I have followed Roesler's *Romänische Studien* and Jirecek's *Geschichte der Bulgaren.*

French Basques, whatever we say of the Spanish brethren, have doubtless memories, but they have hardly political grievances or hopes. Ireland may have political grievances; it certainly has political hopes; but they are not exactly of the same kind as the grievances or hopes of the Greek, the Albanian, and the Rouman. Let Home Rule succeed to the extent of setting up an independent king and parliament of Ireland, yet the language and civilization of that king and parliament would still be English. Ireland would form an English state, politically hostile, it may be, to Great Britain, but still an English state. No Greek, Albanian, or Rouman state would be in the same way either Turkish or Austrian.

On these primitive and abiding races came, as on other parts of Europe, the Roman conquest. That conquest planted Latin colonies on the Dalmatian coast, where the Latin tongue still remains in its Italian variety as the speech of literature and city life; it Romanized one great part of the earlier inhabitants; it had the great political effect of all, that of planting the Roman power in a Greek city, and thereby creating a state, and in the end a nation, which was Roman on one side, and Greek on the other.

Then came the Wandering of the Nations, on which, as regards men of our own race, we need not dwell. The Goths marched at will through the Eastern Empire; but no Teutonic settlement was ever made within its bounds, no lasting Teutonic settlement was ever made even on its border. The part of the Teuton in the West was played, far less perfectly indeed, by the Slav in the East. He is there what the Teuton is here, the great representative of what we may call the modern European races, those whose part in history began after the establishment of the Rouman power. The differences between the position of the two races are chiefly these. The Slav in the East has præ-Roman races standing alongside of him in a way in which the Teuton has not in the West. On the Greeks and Albanians he has had but little influence; on the Rouman and his language his influence has been far greater, but hardly so great as the influence of the Teuton on the Romance nations and languages of Western Europe. The Slav too stands alongside of races which have come in since his own coming, in a way in which the Teuton in the West is still further from doing. That is to say, besides Greeks, Albanians, and Roumans, he stands alongside of Bulgarians,

Magyars, and Turks, who have nothing to answer to them in the West. The Slav, in the time of his coming, in the nature of his settlement, answers roughly to the Teuton; his position is what that of the Teuton would be, if Western Europe had been brought under the power of an alien race at some time later than his own settlement. The Slavs undoubtedly form the greatest element in the population of the Eastern peninsula, and they once reached more widely still. Taking the Slavonic name in its widest meaning, they occupy all the lands from the Danube and its great tributaries southward to the strictly Greek border. The exceptions are where earlier races remain, Greek or Italian on the coast-line, Albanian in the mountains. The Slavs hold the heart of the peninsula, and they hold more than the peninsula itself. The Slav lives equally on both sides of what is or was the frontier of the Austrian and Ottoman empires; indeed, but for another set of causes which have effected Eastern Europe, the Slav might have reached uninterruptedly from the Baltic to the Ægæan.

This last set of causes are those which specially distinguish the histories of Eastern and of Western Europe; a set of causes which,

though exactly twelve hundred years old,[1] are still fresh and living, and which are the special causes which have aggravated the special difficulties of the last five hundred years. In Western Europe, though we have had plenty of political conquests, we have had no national migrations since the days of the Teutonic settlements—at least, if we may extend these last so as to take in the Scandinavian settlements in Britain and Gaul. The Teuton has pressed to the East at the expense of the Slav and the Old-Prussian: the borders between the Romance and the Teutonic nations in the West have fluctuated; but no third set of nations has come in, strange alike to the Roman and the Teuton and to the whole Aryan family. As the Huns of Attila showed themselves in Western Europe as passing ravagers, so did the Magyars at a later day; so did the Ottoman Turks in a day later still, when they besieged Vienna and laid waste the Venetian mainland. But all these Turanian invaders appeared in Western Europe simply as passing invaders; in Eastern Europe their part has been widely

[1] It should be remembered that, as the year 1879 saw the beginning of the liberated Bulgarian state, the year 679 saw the beginning of the first Bulgarian kingdom south of the Danube.

different. Besides the temporary dominion of Avars, Patzinaks, Chazars, Cumans, and a crowd of others, three bodies of more abiding settlers, the Bulgarians, the Magyars, and the Mongol conquerors of Russia, have come in by one path; a fourth, the Ottoman Turks, have come in by another path. Among all these invasions we have one case of thorough assimilation, and only one. The original Finnish Bulgarians have, like Western conquerors, been lost among Slavonic subjects and neighbors. The geographical function of the Magyar has been to keep the two great groups of Slavonic nations apart. To his coming, more than to any other cause, we may attribute the great historical gap which separates the Slav of the Baltic from his southern kinsfolk. The work of the Ottoman Turk we all know. These latter settlers remain alongside of the Slav, just as the Slav remains alongside of the earlier settlers. The Slavonized Bulgarians are the only instance of assimilation such as we are used to in the West. All the other races, old and new, from the Albanian to the Ottoman, are still there, each keeping its national being and its national speech. And in one part of the ancient Dacia we must add quite a distinct

element, the element of Teutonic occupation in a form unlike any in which we see it in the West, in the shape of the Saxons of Transsilvania.

We have thus worked out our point in detail. While in each Western country some one of the various races which have settled in it has, speaking roughly, assimilated the others, in the lands which are left under the rule of the Turk, or which have been lately delivered from his rule, all the races that have ever settled in the country still abide side by side. So when we pass into the lands which form the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, we find that that composite dominion is just as much opposed as the dominion of the Turk is to those ideas of nationality toward which Western Europe has been long feeling its way. We have seen by the example of Switzerland that it is possible to make an artificial nation out of fragments which have split off from three several nations. But the Austro-Hungarian monarchy is not a nation, not even an artificial nation of this kind. Its elements are not bound together in the same way as the three elements of the Swiss Confederation. It does indeed contain one whole nation in the form of the Magyars; we might

say that it contains two, if we reckon the Czechs for a distinct nation. Of its other elements, we may for the moment set aside those parts of Germany which are so strangely united with the crowns of Hungary and Dalmatia. In those parts of the monarchy which come within the more strictly Eastern lands—the *Roman* and the *Rouman*,—we may so distinguish the Romance-speaking inhabitants of Dalmatia and the Romance-speaking inhabitants of Transsilvania. The Slav of the north and of the south, the Magyar conqueror, the Saxon immigrant, all abide as distinct races. That the Ottoman is not to be added to our list in Hungary, while he is to be added in lands farther south, is simply because he has been driven out of Hungary, while he is allowed to abide in lands farther south. No point is more important to insist on now than the fact that the Ottoman once held the greater part of Hungary by exactly the same right, the right of the strongest, as that by which he still holds Macedonia and Epeiros. It is simply the result of a century of warfare, from Sobieski to Joseph the Second, which fixed the boundary which only yesterday seemed eternal to diplomatists, but which now seems to have vanished. That

boundary has advanced and gone back over and over again. As Buda once was Turkish, Belgrade has more than once been Austrian. The whole of the southeastern lands, Austrian, Turkish, and independent, from the Carpathian Mountains southward, present the same characteristic of permanence and distinctness among the several races which occupy them. The several races may lie, here in large continuous masses, there in small detached settlements; but there they all are in their distinctness. There is among them plenty of living and active national feeling; but while in the West political arrangements for the most part follow the great lines of national feeling, in the East the only way in which national feeling can show itself is by protesting, whether in arms or otherwise, against existing political arrangements. Save the Magyars alone, the ruling race in the Hungarian kingdom, there is no case in those lands in which the whole continuous territory inhabited by speakers of the same tongue is placed under a separate national government of its own. And, even in this case, the identity between nation and government is imperfect in two ways. It is imperfect, because, after all, though Hungary has a separate national gov-

ernment in internal matters, yet it is not the Hungarian kingdom, but the Austro-Hungarian monarchy of which it forms a part, which counts as a power among the other powers of Europe. And the national character of the Hungarian government is equally imperfect from the other side. It is national as regards the Magyar; it is not national as regards the Slav, the Saxon, and the Rouman. Since the liberation of part of Bulgaria, no whole European nation is under the rule of the Turk. No one nation of the Southeast peninsula forms a single national government. One fragment of a nation is free under a national government, another fragment is ruled by civilized strangers, a third is trampled down by barbarians. The existing states of Greece, Roumania, and Servia are far from taking in the whole of the Greek Rouman, and Servian nations. In all these lands, Austrian, Turkish, and independent, there is no difficulty in marking off the several nations; only in no case do the nations answer to any existing political power.

In all these cases, where nationality and government are altogether divorced, language becomes yet more distinctly the test of nationality than it is in Western lands where nation-

ality and government do to some extent coincide. And when nationality and language do not coincide in the East, it is owing to another cause, of which also we know nothing in the West. In many cases religion takes the place of nationality; or rather the ideas of religion and nationality can hardly be distinguished. In the West a man's nationality is in no way affected by the religion which he professes, or even by his change from one religion to another. In the East it is otherwise. The Christian renegade who embraces Islam becomes for most practical purposes a Turk. Even if, as in Crete and Bosnia, he keeps his Greek or Slavonic language, he remains Greek or Slav only in a secondary sense. For the first principle of the Mahometan religion, the lordship of the true believer over the infidel, cuts off the possibility of any true national fellowship between the true believer and the infidel. Even the Greek or Armenian who embraces the Latin creed goes far toward parting with his nationality as well as with his religion. For the adoption of the Latin creed implies what is in some sort the adoption of a new allegiance, the accepting of the authority of the Roman Bishop. In the Armenian in-

deed we are come very near to the phenomena of the further East, where names like Parsee and Hindoo, names in themselves as strictly ethnical as Englishman or Frenchman, have come to express distinctions in which religion and nationality are absolutely the same thing. Of this whole class of phenomena the Jew is of course the crowning example. But we speak of these matters here only as bringing in an element in the definition of nationality to which we are unused in the West. But it quite comes within our present subject to give one definition from the Southeastern lands. What is the Greek? Clearly he who is at once a Greek in speech and Orthodox in faith. The Hellenic Mussulmans in Crete, even the Hellenic Latins in some of the other islands, are at the most imperfect members of the Hellenic body. The utmost that can be said is that they keep the power of again entering that body, either by their own return to the national faith, or by such a change in the state of things as shall make difference in religion no longer inconsistent with true national fellowship.

Thus, wherever we go, we find language to be the rough practical test of nationality. The

exceptions are many; they may perhaps outnumber the instances which conform to the rule. Still they are exceptions. Community of language does not imply community of blood; it might be added that diversity of language does not imply diversity of blood. But community of language is, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, a presumption of the community of blood, and it is proof of something which for practical purposes is the same as community of blood. To talk of "the Latin race," is in strictness absurd. We know that the so-called race is simply made up of those nations which adopted the Latin language. The Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic races may conceivably have been formed by a like artificial process. But the presumption is the other way; and if such a process ever took place, it took place long before history began. The Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic races come before us as groups of mankind marked out by the test of language. Within those races separate nations are again marked out by a stricter application of the test of language. Within the race we may have languages which are clearly akin to each other, but which need not be mutually intelligible. Within the nation

we have only dialects which are mutually intelligible, or which, at all events, gather round some one central dialect which is intelligible to all. We take this standard of races and nations, fully aware that it will not stand a physiological test, but holding that for all practical purposes adoption must pass as equivalent to natural descent. And, among the practical purposes which are affected by the facts of race and nationality, we must, as long as a man is what he is, as long as he has not been created afresh according to some new scientific pattern, not shrink from reckoning those generous emotions which, in the present state of European feeling, are beginning to bind together the greater as well as the lesser groups of mankind. The sympathies of men are beginning to reach wider than could have been dreamed of a century ago. The feeling which was once confined to the mere household extended itself to the tribe or the city. From the tribe or city it extended itself to the nation; from the nation it is beginning to extend itself to the whole race. In some cases it can extend itself to the whole race far more easily than in others. In some cases historical causes have made nations of the same race bitter enemies, while they

have made nations of different races friendly allies. The same thing happened in earlier days between tribes and cities of the same nation. But, when hindrances of this kind do not exist, the feeling of race, as something beyond the narrower feeling of nationality, is beginning to be a powerful agent in the feelings and actions of men and of nations. A long series of mutual wrongs, conquest, and oppression on one side, avenged by conquest and oppression on the other side, have made the Slav of Poland and the Slav of Russia the bitterest of enemies. No such hindrance exists to stop the flow of natural and generous feeling between the Slav of Russia and the Slav of the Southeastern lands. Those whose statesmanship consists in some hand-to-mouth shift for the moment, whose wisdom consists in refusing to look either back to the past or onward to the future, cannot understand this great fact of our times; and what they cannot understand they mock at. But the fact exists and does its work in spite of them. And it does its work none the less because in some cases the feeling of sympathy is awakened by a claim of kindred, where, in the sense of the physiologist or the genealogist, there is no kindred at all. The

practical view, historical or political, will accept as members of this or that race or nation many members whom the physiologist would shut out, whom the English lawyer would shut out, but whom the Roman lawyer would gladly welcome to every privilege of the stock on which they were grafted. The line of the Scipios, of the Cæsars, and of the Antonines, was continued by adoption; and for all practical purposes the nations of the earth have agreed to follow the examples set them by their masters.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

BORN 1809.

KIN BEYOND SEA.*

By WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

"When Love unites, wide space divides in vain,
And hands may clasp across the spreading main."

IT is now nearly half a century since the works of De Tocqueville and De Beaumont, founded upon personal observation, brought the institutions of the United States effectually within the circle of European thought and interest. They were co-operators, but not upon an equal scale. De Beaumont belongs to the class of ordinary, though able, writers: De Tocqueville was the Burke of his age, and his treatise upon America may well be regarded as among the best books hitherto produced for the political student of all times and countries.

But higher and deeper than the concern of the Old World at large in the thirteen colonies, now grown into thirty-eight States, besides

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eight Territories, is the special interest of England in their condition and prospects.

I do not speak of political controversies between them and us, which are happily, as I trust, at an end. I do not speak of the vast contribution which, from year to year, through the operations of a colossal trade, each makes to the wealth and comfort of the other; nor of the friendly controversy, which in its own place it might be well to raise, between the leanings of America to Protectionism, and the more daring reliance of the old country upon free and unrestricted intercourse with all the world. Nor of the menace which, in the prospective development of her resources, America offers to the commercial pre-eminence of England.[1] On this subject I will only say that it is she alone who, at a coming time, can, and probably will, wrest from us that commercial primacy. We have no title, I have no inclination, to murmur at the prospect. If she acquires it, she will make the acquisition by the right of the strong-

[1] [This topic was much more largely handled by me in the Financial Statement which I delivered, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, on May 2, 1866. I recommend attention to the excellent article by Mr. Henderson, in the *Contemporary Review* for October, 1878: and I agree with the author in being disposed to think that the protective laws of America effectually bar the full development of her competing power. —W. E. G., Nov. 6, 1878.]

est; but, in this instance, the strongest means the best. She will probably become what we are now, the head servant in the great household of the world, the employer of all employed; because her service will be the most and ablest. We have no more title against her, than Venice, or Genoa, or Holland has had against us. One great duty is entailed upon us, which we, unfortunately, neglect: the duty of preparing, by a resolute and sturdy effort, to reduce our public burdens, in preparation for a day when we shall probably have less capacity than we have now to bear them.

Passing by all these subjects, with their varied attractions, I come to another, which lies within the tranquil domain of political philosophy. The students of the future, in this department, will have much to say in the way of comparison between American and British institutions. The relationship between these two is unique in history. It is always interesting to trace and to compare Constitutions, as it is to compare languages; especially in such instances as those of the Greek States and the Italian Republics, or the diversified forms of the feudal system in the different countries of Europe. But there is no parallel in all the

records of the world to the case of that prolific British mother, who has sent forth her innumerable children over all the earth to be the founders of half-a-dozen empires. She, with her progeny, may almost claim to constitute a kind of Universal Church in politics. But, among these children, there is one whose place in the world's eye and in history is superlative: it is the American Republic. She is the eldest born. She has, taking the capacity of her land into view as well as its mere measurement, a natural base for the greatest continuous empire ever established by man. And it may be well here to mention what has not always been sufficiently observed, that the distinction between continuous empire, and empire severed and dispersed over sea, is vital. The development, which the Republic has effected, has been unexampled in its rapidity and force. While other countries have doubled, or at most trebled, their population, she has risen, during one single century of freedom, in round numbers, from two millions to forty-five. As to riches, it is reasonable to establish, from the decennial stages of the progress thus far achieved, a series for the future; and, reckoning upon this basis, I suppose that the very next

census, in the year 1880, will exhibit her to the world as certainly the wealthiest of all the nations. The huge figure of a thousand millions sterling, which may be taken roundly as the annual income of the United Kingdom, has been reached at a surprising rate; a rate which may perhaps be best expressed by saying, that if we could have started forty or fifty years ago from zero, at the rate of our recent annual increment, we should now have reached our present position. But while we have been advancing with this portentous rapidity, America is passing us by as if in a canter. Yet even now the work of searching the soil and the bowels of the territory, and opening out her enterprise throughout its vast expanse, is in its infancy. The England and the America of the present are probably the two strongest nations of the world. But there can hardly be a doubt, as between the America and the England of the future, that the daughter, at some no very distant time, will, whether fairer or less fair, be unquestionably yet stronger than the mother.

"O matre forti filia fortior." [1]

But all this pompous detail of material

[1] See Hor., Od. I., 16.

triumphs, whether for the one or for the other, is worse than idle, unless the men of the two countries shall remain, or shall become, greater than the mere things that they produce, and shall know how to regard those things simply as tools and materials for the attainments of the highest purposes of their being. Ascending, then, from the ground-floor of material industry toward the regions in which these purposes are to be wrought out, it is for each nation to consider how far its institutions have reached a state in which they can contribute their maximum to the store of human happiness and excellence. And for the political student all over the world, it will be beyond any thing curious as well as useful to examine with what diversities, as well as what resemblances, of apparatus the two greater branches of a race born to command have been minded, or induced, or constrained to work out, in their sea-severed seats, their political destinies according to the respective laws appointed for them.

No higher ambition can find vent in a paper such as this, than to suggest the position and claims of the subject, and slightly to indicate a few outlines, or, at least, fragments, of the working material.

In many and the most fundamental respects the two still carry in undiminished, perhaps in increasing, clearness, the notes of resemblance that beseem a parent and a child.

Both wish for self-government; and, however grave the drawbacks under which in one or both it exists, the two have, among the great nations of the world, made the most effectual advances toward the true aim of rational politics.

They are similarly associated in their fixed idea that the force, in which all government takes effect, is to be constantly backed, and, as it were, illuminated, by thought in speech and writing. The ruler of St. Paul's time "bare the sword" (Rom. xiii: 4). Bare, it as the Apostle says, with a mission to do right; but he says nothing of any duty, or any custom, to show by reason that he was doing right. Our two governments, whatsoever they do, have to give reasons for it; not reasons which will convince the unreasonable, but reasons which on the whole will convince the average mind, and carry it unitedly forward in a course of action, often, though not always, wise, and carrying within itself provisions, where it is unwise, for the correction of its own unwisdom before it grow into

an intolerable rankness. They are governments, not of force only, but of persuasion.

Many more are the concords, and not less vital than these, of the two nations, as expressed in their institutions. They alike prefer the practical to the abstract. They tolerate opinion, with only a reserve on behalf of decency; and they desire to confine coercion to the province of action, and to leave thought, as such, entirely free. They set a high value on liberty for its own sake. They desire to give full scope to the principle of self-reliance in the people, and they deem self-help to be immeasurably superior to help in any other form; to be the only help, in short, which ought not to be continually, or periodically, put upon its trial, and required to make good its title. They mistrust and mislike the centralization of power; and they cherish municipal, local, even parochial liberties, as nursery grounds, not only for the production here and there of able men, but for the general training of public virtue and independent spirit. They regard publicity as the vital air of politics; through which alone, in its freest circulation, opinions can be thrown into common stock for the good of all, and the balance of relative rights and claims can be habitu-

ally and peaceably adjusted. It would be difficult in the case of any other pair of nations, to present an assemblage of traits at once so common and so distinctive, as has been given in this probably imperfect enumeration.

There were, however, the strongest reasons why America could not grow into a reflection or repetition of England. Passing from a narrow island to a continent almost without bounds, the colonists at once and vitally altered their conditions of thought as well as of existence, in relation to the most important and most operative of all social facts, the possession of the soil. In England, inequality lies embedded in the very base of the social structure; in America it is a late, incidental, unrecognized product, not of tradition, but of industry and wealth, as they advance with various and, of necessity, unequal steps. Heredity, seated as an idea in the heart's core of Englishmen, and sustaining far more than it is sustained by those of our institutions which express it, was as truly absent from the intellectual and moral store, with which the colonists traversed the Atlantic, as if it had been some forgotten article in the bills of lading that made up their cargoes. Equality combined with liberty, and renewable

at each descent from one generation to another, like a lease with stipulated breaks, was the groundwork of their social creed. In vain was it sought, by arrangements such as those connected with the name of Baltimore or of Penn, to qualify the action of those overpowering forces which so determined the case. Slavery itself, strange as it now may seem, failed to impair the theory however it may have imported into the practice a hideous solecism. No hardier republicanism was generated in New England than in the Slave States of the South, which produced so many of the great statesmen of America.

It may be said that the North, and not the South, had the larger number of colonists; and was the centre of those commanding moral influences which gave to the country as a whole its political and moral atmosphere. The type and form of manhood for America was supplied neither by the Recusant in Maryland, nor by the Cavalier in Virginia, but by the Puritan of New England; and it would have been a form and type widely different could the colonization have taken place a couple of centuries, or a single century, sooner. Neither the Tudor, nor even the Plantagenet period, could have sup-

plied its special form. The Reformation was a cardinal factor in its production; and this in more ways than one.

Before that great epoch, the political forces of the country were represented on the whole by the monarch on one side, and the people on the other. In the people, setting aside the latent vein of Lollardism, there was a general homogeneity with respect to all that concerned the relation of governors and governed. In the deposition of sovereigns, the resistance to abuses, the establishment of institutions for the defence of liberty, there were no two parties to divide the land. But, with the Reformation, a new dualism was sensibly developed among us. Not a dualism so violent as to break up the national unity, but yet one so marked and substantial, that thenceforward it was very difficult for any individual or body of men to represent the entire English character, and the old balance of its forces. The wrench which severed the Church and people from the Roman obedience left for domestic settlement thereafter a tremendous internal question, between the historical and the new, which in its milder form perplexes us to this day. Except during the short reign of Edward VI, the civil

power, in various methods and degrees, took what may be termed the traditionary side, and favored the development of the historical more than the individual aspect of the national religion. These elements confronted one another during the reigns of the earlier Stuarts, not only with obstinacy but with fierceness. There had grown up with the Tudors, from a variety of causes, a great exaggeration of the idea of royal power; and this arrived, under James I and Charles I, at a rank maturity. Not less, but even more masculine and determined, was the converse development. Mr. Hallam saw, and has said, that at the outbreak of the Great Rebellion, the old British Constitution was in danger, not from one party but from both. In that mixed fabric had once been harmonized the ideas, both of religious duty, and of allegiance as related to it, which were now held in severance. The hardiest and dominating portion of the American colonists represented that severance in its extremest form, and had dropped out of the order of the ideas, which they carried across the water, all those elements of political Anglicism, which give to aristocracy in this country a position only second in strength to that of freedom. State and Church alike had

frowned upon them; and their strong reaction was a reaction of their entire nature, alike of the spiritual and the secular man. All that was democratic in the policy of England, and all that was Protestant in her religion, they carried with them, in pronounced and exclusive forms, to a soil and a scene singularly suited for their growth.

It is to the honor of the British Monarchy that, upon the whole, it frankly recognized the facts, and did not pedantically endeavor to constrain by artificial and alien limitations the growth of the infant states. It is a thing to be remembered that the accusations of the colonies in 1776 were entirely levelled at the king actually on the throne, and that a general acquittal was thus given by them to every preceding reign. Their infancy had been upon the whole what their manhood was to be, self-governed and republican. Their Revolution, as we call it, was like ours in the main, a vindication of liberties inherited and possessed. It was a Conservative revolution; and the happy result was that, notwithstanding the sharpness of the collision with the mother-country, and with domestic loyalism, the Thirteen Colonies made provision for their future in conformity, as to

all that determined life and manners with the recollections of their past. The two Constitutions of the two countries express indeed rather the differences than the resemblances of the nations. The one is a thing grown, the other a thing made; the one a *praxis*, the other a *poiesis:* the one the offspring of tendency and indeterminate time, the other of choice and of an epoch. But, as the British Constitution is the most subtle organism which has proceeded from the womb and the long gestation of progressive history, so the American Constitution is, so-far as I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man. It has had a century of trial, under the pressure of exigencies caused by an expansion unexampled in point of rapidity and range: and its exemption from formal change, though not entire, has certainly proved the sagacity of the constructors, and the stubborn strength of the fabric.

One whose life has been greatly absorbed in working, with others, the institutions of his own country, has not had the opportunites necessary for the careful and searching scrutiny of institutions elsewhere. I should feel, in looking at those of America, like one who attempts

to scan the stars with the naked eye. My notices can only be few, faint, and superficial; they are but an introduction to what I have to say of the land of my birth. A few sentences will dispose of them.

America, whose attitude toward England has always been masculine and real, has no longer to anticipate at our hands the frivolous and offensive criticisms which were once in vogue among us. But neither nation prefers (and it would be an ill sign if either did prefer) the institutions of the other; and we certainly do not contemplate the great Republic in the spirit of mere optimism. We see that it has a marvellous and unexampled adaptation for its peculiar vocation; that it must be judged, not in the abstract, but under the fore-ordered laws of its existence; that it has purged away the blot with which we brought it into the world; that it gravely and vigorously grapples with the problem of making a continent into a state; and that it treasures with fondness the traditions of British antiquity, which are in truth unconditionally its own, as well, and as much as they are ours. The thing that perhaps chiefly puzzles the inhabitants of the old country is why the American people should permit

their entire existence to be continually disturbed by the business of the Presidential elections; and, still more, why they should raise to its maximum the intensity of this perturbation by providing, as we are told, for what is termed a clean sweep of the entire civil service, in all its ranks and departments, on each accession of a chief magistrate. We do not perceive why this arrangement is more rational than would be a corresponding usage in this country on each change of Ministry. Our practice is as different as possible. We limit to a few scores of persons the removals and appointments on these occasions; although our Ministries seem to us, not unfrequently, to be more sharply severed from one another in principle and tendency than are the successive Presidents of the great Union.

It would be out of place to discuss in this article occasional phenomena of local corruption in the United States, by which the nation at large can hardly be touched: or the mysterious manipulations of votes for the Presidency, which are now understood to be under examination; or the very curious influences which are shaping the politics of the negroes and of the South. These last are corollaries to

the great slave-question: and it seems very possible that after a few years we may see most of the laborers, both in the Southern States and in England, actively addicted to the political support of that section of their countrymen who to the last had resisted their emancipation.

But if there be those in this country who think that American democracy means public levity and intemperance, or a lack of skill and sagacity in politics, or the absence of self-command and self-denial, let them bear in mind a few of the most salient and recent facts of history which may profitably be recommended to their reflections. We emancipated a million of negroes by peaceful legislation; America liberated four or five millions by a bloody civil war: yet the industry and exports of the Southern States are maintained, while those of our negro colonies have dwindled; the South enjoys all its franchises, but we have, *proh pudor!* found no better method of providing for peace and order in Jamaica, the chief of our islands, than by the hard and vulgar, even where needful, expedient of abolishing entirely its representative institutions.

The Civil War compelled the States, both

North and South, to train and embody a million and a half of men, and to present to view the greatest, instead of the smallest, armed forces in the world. Here there was supposed to arise a double danger. First, that on a sudden cessation of the war, military life and habits could not be shaken off, and, having become rudely and widely predominant, would bias the country toward an aggressive policy, or, still worse, would find vent in predatory or revolutionary operations. Secondly, that a military caste would grow up with its habits of exclusiveness and command, and would influence the tone of politics in a direction adverse to republican freedom. But both apprehensions proved to be wholly imaginary. The innumerable soldiery was at once dissolved. Cincinnatus, no longer an unique example, became the commonplace of every day, the type and mould of a nation. The whole enormous mass quietly resumed the habits of social life. The generals of yesterday were the editors, the secretaries, and the solicitors of to-day. The just jealousy of the State gave life to the now forgotten maxim of Judge Blackstone, who denounced as perilous the erection of a separate profession of arms in a free country. The

standing army, expanded by the heat of civil contest to gigantic dimensions, settled down again into the framework of a miniature with the returning temperature of civil life, and became a power wellnigh invisible, from its minuteness, amidst the powers which sway the movements of a society exceeding forty millions.

More remarkable still was the financial sequel to the great conflict. The internal taxation for Federal purposes, which before its commencement had been unknown, was raised, in obedience to an exigency of life and death, so as to exceed every present and every past example. It pursued and worried all the transactions of life. The interest of the American debt grew to be the highest in the world, and the capital touched five hundred and sixty millions sterling. Here was provided for the faith and patience of the people a touchstone of extreme severity. In England, at the close of the great French war, the propertied classes, who were supreme in Parliament, at once rebelled against the Tory Government, and refused to prolong the income tax even for a single year. We talked big, both then and now, about the payment of our national debt; but sixty-three

years have since elapsed, all of them except two called years of peace, and we have reduced the huge total by about one ninth; that is to say, by little over one hundred millions, or scarcely more than one million and a half a year. This is the conduct of a State elaborately digested into orders and degrees, famed for wisdom and forethought, and consolidated by a long experience. But America continued long to bear, on her unaccustomed and still smarting shoulders, the burden of the war taxation. In twelve years she has reduced her debt by one hundred and fifty-eight millions sterling, or at the rate of thirteen millions for every year. In each twelve months she has done what we did in eight years; her self-command, self-denial, and wise forethought for the future have been, to say the least, eightfold ours. These are facts which redound greatly to her honor; and the historian will record with surprise that an enfranchised nation tolerated burdens which in this country a selected class, possessed of the representation, did not dare to face, and that the most unmitigated democracy known to the annals of the world resolutely reduced at its own cost prospective liabilities of the State, which the aristocratic, and plutocratic, and mon-

archical government of the United Kingdom has been contented ignobly to hand over to posterity. And such facts should be told out. It is our fashion so to tell them, against as well as for ourselves; and the record of them may some day be among the means of stirring us up to a policy more worthy of the name and fame of England.

It is true, indeed, that we lie under some heavy and, I fear, increasing disadvantages, which amount almost to disabilities. Not, however, any disadvantage respecting power, as power is commonly understood. But, while America has a nearly homogeneous country, and an admirable division of political labor between the States individually and the Federal Government, we are, in public affairs, an overcharged and overweighted people.[1]

We have undertaken the cares of empire upon a scale, and with a diversity, unexampled in history; and, as it has not yet pleased Providence to endow us with brain-force and animal strength in an equally abnormal proportion, the consequence is that we perform the work of

[1] [This subject has been more fully developed by me in an article on "England's Mission," contributed to *The Nineteenth Century* for September of the present year.—W. E. G., December, 1878.]

government, as to many among its more important departments, in a very superficial and slovenly manner. The affairs of the three associated kingdoms, with their great diversities of law, interest, and circumstance, make the government of them, even if they stood alone, a business more voluminous, so to speak, than that of any other thirty-three millions of civilized men. To lighten the cares of the central legislature by judicious devolution, it is probable that much might be done; but nothing is done, or even attempted to be done. The greater colonies have happily attained to a virtual self-government; yet the aggregate mass of business connected with our colonial possessions continues to be very large. The Indian Empire is of itself a charge so vast, and demanding so much thought and care, that if it were the sole transmarine appendage to the crown, it would amply tax the best ordinary stock of human energies. Notoriously it obtains from the Parliament only a small fraction of the attention it deserves. Questions affecting individuals, again, or small interests, or classes, excite here a greater interest, and occupy a larger share of time, than, perhaps, in any other community. In no country, I may add, are the

interests of persons or classes so favored when they compete with those of the public; and in none are they more exacting, or more wakeful to turn this advantage to the best account. With the vast extension of our enterprise and our trade, comes a breadth of liability not less large, to consider every thing that is critical in the affairs of foreign states; and the real responsibilities thus existing for us, are unnaturally inflated for us by fast-growing tendencies toward exaggeration of our concern in these matters, and even toward setting up fictitious interests in cases where none can discern them except ourselves, and such continental friends as practice upon our credulity and our fears for purposes of their own. Last of all, it is not to be denied that in what I have been saying, I do not represent the public sentiment. The nation is not at all conscious of being overdone. The people see that their House of Commons is the hardest-working legislative assembly in the world: and, this being so, they assume it is all right. Nothing pays better, in point of popularity, than those gratuitous additions to obligations already beyond human strength, which look like accessions or assertion of power; such as the annexation of new territory, or the silly transac-

tion known as the purchase of shares in the Suez Canal.

All my life long I have seen this excess of work as compared with the power to do it; but the evil has increased with the surfeit of wealth, and there is no sign that the increase is near its end. The people of this country are a very strong people; but there is no strength that can permanently endure, without provoking inconvenient consequences, this kind of political debauch. It may be hoped, but it cannot be predicted, that the mischief will be encountered and subdued at the point where it will have become sensibly troublesome, but will not have grown to be quite irremediable.

The main and central point of interest, however, in the institutions of a country is the manner in which it draws together and compounds the public forces in the balanced action of the State. It seems plain that the formal arrangements for this purpose in America are very different from ours. It may even be a question whether they are not, in certain respects, less popular; whether our institutions do not give more rapid effect, than those of the Union, to any formed opinion, and resolved intention, of the nation.

In the formation of the Federal Government we seem to perceive three stages of distinct advancement. First, the formation of the Confederation, under the pressure of the War of Independence. Secondly, the Constitution, which placed the Federal Government in defined and direct relation with the people inhabiting the several States. Thirdly, the struggle with the South, which for the first time, and definitely, decided that to the Union, through its Federal organization, and not to the State governments, were reserved all the questions not decided and disposed of by the express provisions of the Constitution itself.' The great *arcanum imperii*, which with us belongs to the three branches of the Legislature, and which is expressed by the current phrase, "omnipotence of Parliament," thus became the acknowledged property of the three branches

[1] [This is a proposition of great importance in a disputed subject-matter; and consequently I have not announced it in a dogmatic manner, but as a portion of what we "seem to perceive" in the progress of the American Constitution. It expresses an opinion formed by me upon an examination of the original documents, and with some attention to the history, which I have always considered, and have often recommended to others, as one of the most fruitful studies of modern politics. This is not the proper occasion to develop its grounds: but I may say that I am not at all disposed to surrender it in deference to one or two rather contemptuous critics.—W. E. G., December, 1868.]

of the Federal Legislature; and the old and respectable doctrine of State independence is now no more than an archæological relic, a piece of historical antiquarianism. Yet the actual attributions of the State authorities cover by far the largest part of the province of government; and by this division of labor and authority, the problem of fixing for the nation a political centre of gravity is divested of a large part of its difficulty and danger, in some proportions to the limitations of the working precinct.

Within that precinct, the initiation as well as the final sanction in the great business of finance is made over to the popular branch of the Legislature, and a most interesting question arises upon the comparative merits of this arrangement, and of our our method, which theoretically throws upon the Crown the responsibility of initiating public charge, and under which, until a recent period, our practice was in actual and even close correspondence with this theory.

We next come to a difference still more marked. The Federal Executive is born anew of the nation at the end of each four years, and dies at the end. But, during the course of

those years, it is independent, in the person both of the President and of his Ministers, alike of the people, of their representatives, and of that remarkable body, the most remarkable of all the inventions of modern politics, the Senate of the United States. In this important matter, whatever be the relative excellencies and defects of the British and American systems, it is most certain that nothing would induce the people of this country, or even the Tory portion of them, to exchange our own for theirs. It may, indeed, not be obvious to the foreign eye what is the exact difference of the two. Both the representative chambers hold the power of the purse. But in America its conditions are such that it does not operate in any way on behalf of the Chamber or of the nation, as against the Executive. In England, on the contrary, its efficiency has been such that it has worked out for itself channels of effective operation, such as to dispense with its direct use, and avoid the inconveniences which might be attendant upon that use. A vote of the House of Commons, declaring a withdrawal of its confidence, has always sufficed for the purpose of displacing a Ministry; nay, persistent obstruction of its measures, and even

lighter causes, have conveyed the hint, which has been obediently taken. But the people, how is it with them? Do not the people in England part with their power, and make it over to the House of Commons, as completely as the American people part with it to the President? They give it over for four years: we for a period which on the average is somewhat more: they, to resume it at a fixed time; we, on an unfixed contingency, and at a time which will finally be determined, not according to the popular will, but according to the views which a Ministry may entertain of its duty or convenience.

All this is true; but it is not the whole truth. In the United Kingdom, the people as such cannot commonly act upon the Ministry as such. But mediately, though not immediately, they gain the end: for they can work upon that which works upon the Ministry, namely, on the House of Commons. Firstly, they have not renounced, like the American people, the exercise of their power for a given time; and they are at all times free by speech, petition, public meeting, to endeavor to get it back in full by bringing about a dissolution. Secondly, in a Parliament with nearly 660 members,

vacancies occur with tolerable frequency; and, as they are commonly filled up forthwith, they continually modify the color of the Parliament, comformably, not to the past, but to the present feeling of the nation; or, at least, of the constituency, which for practical purposes is different indeed, yet not very different. But, besides exercising a limited positive influence on the present, they supply a much less limited indication of the future. Of the members who at a given time sit in the House of Commons, the vast majority, probably more than nine-tenths, have the desire to sit there again, after a dissolution which may come at any moment. They therefore study political weather-wisdom, and in varying degrees adapt themselves to the indications of the sky. It will now be readily perceived how the popular sentiment in England, so far as it is awake, is not meanly provided with the ways of making itself respected, whether for the purpose of displacing and replacing a Ministry, or of constraining it (as sometimes happens) to alter or reverse its policy sufficiently, at least, to conjure down the gathering and muttering storm.

It is true, indeed, that every nation is of necessity, to a great extent, in the condition of

the sluggard with regard to public policy; hard to rouse, harder to keep aroused, sure after a little while to sink back into his slumber:—

> "Pressitigue jacentem,
> Dulcis et alta quies, placidæque simillima morti."
> —Æn., vi, 522.

The people have a vast, but an encumbered power; and, in their struggles with overweening authority, or with property, the excess of force, which they undoubtedly possess, is more than counterbalanced by the constant wakefulness of the adversary, by his knowledge of their weakness, and by his command of opportunity. But this is a fault lying rather in the conditions of human life than in political institutions. There is no known mode of making attention and inattention equal in their results. It is enough to say that in England, when the nation can attend, it can prevail. So we may say, then, that in the American Union the Federal Executive is independent for each four years both of the Congress and of the people. But the British Ministry is largely dependent on the people whenever the people firmly will it; and is always dependent on the House of Commons, except of course when it can safely and effectually appeal to the people.

So far, so good. But if we wish really to understand the manner in which the Queen's Government over the British Empire is carried on, we must now prepare to examine into some sharper contrasts than any which our path has yet brought into view. The power of the American Executive resides in the person of the actual President, and passes from him to his successor. His Ministers, grouped around him, are the servants, not only of his office, but of his mind. The intelligence, which carries on the Government, has its main seat in him. The responsibility of failures is understood to fall on him; and it is round his head that success sheds its halo. The American Government is described truly as a Government composed of three members, of three powers distinct from one another. The English Government is likewise so described, not truly, but conventionally. For in the English Government there has gradually formed itself a fourth power, entering into and sharing the vitality of each of the other three, and charged with the business of holding them in harmony as they march.

This Fourth Power is the Ministry, or more properly the Cabinet. For the rest of the

Ministry is surbordinate and ancillary; and, though it largely shares in many departments the labors of the Cabinet, yet it has only a secondary and derivative share in the higher responsibilities. No account of the present British Constitution is worth having which does not take this Fourth Power largely and carefully into view. And yet it is not a distinct power, made up of elements unknown to the other three; any more than a sphere contains elements other than those referable to the three co-ordinates, which determine the position of every point in space. The Fourth Power is parasitical to the three others; and lives upon their life, without any separate existence. One portion of it forms a part, which may be termed an integral part, of the House of Lords, another of the House of Commons; and the two conjointly, nestling within the precinct of Royalty, form the inner Council of the Crown, assuming the whole of its responsibilities, and in consequence wielding, as a rule, its powers. The Cabinet is the threefold hinge that con nects together for action the British Constitution of King or Queen, Lords and Commons. Upon it is concentrated the whole strain of the Government, and it constitutes from day to

day the true centre of gravity for the working system of the State, although the ultimate superiority of force resides in the representative chamber.

There is no statute or legal usage of this country which requires that the Ministers of the Crown should hold seats in the one or the other House of Parliament. It is perhaps upon this account that, while most of my countrymen would, as I suppose, declare it to be a becoming and convenient custom, yet comparatively few are aware how near the seat of life the observance lies, how closely it is connected with the equipoise and unity of the social forces. It is rarely departed from, even in an individual case; never, as far as my knowledge goes, on a wider scale. From accidental circumstances it happened that I was Secretary of State between December 1845 and July 1846, without a seat in the House of Commons. This (which did not pass wholly without challenge) is, I believe, by much the most notable instance for the last fifty years; and it is only within the last fifty years that our Constitutional system has completely settled down. Before the reform of Parliament it was always easy to find a place for a Minister

excluded from his seat; as Sir Robert Peel, for example, ejected from Oxford University, at once found refuge and repose at Tamworth. I desire to fix attention on the identification, in this country, of the Minister with the member of a House of Parliament.

It is, as to the House of Commons, especially, an inseparable and vital part of our system. The association of the Ministers with the Parliament, and through the House of Commons with the people, is the counterpart of their association as Ministers with the Crown and the prerogative. The decisions that they take are taken under the competing pressure of a bias this way and a bias that way, and strictly represent what is termed in mechanics the composition of forces. Upon them, thus placed, it devolves to provide that the House of Parliament shall loyally counsel and serve the Crown, and that the Crown shall act strictly in accordance with its obligations to the nation. I will not presume to say whether the adoption of the rule in America would or would not lay the foundation of a great change in the Federal Constitution; but I am quite sure that the abrogation of it in England would either alter the form of government, or bring

about a crisis. That it conduces to the personal comfort of Ministers, I will not undertake to say. The various currents of political and social influences meet edgeways in their persons, much like the conflicting tides in St. George's Channel or the Straits of Dover; for, while they are the ultimate regulators of the relations between the Crown on the one side, and the people through the Houses of Parliament on the other, they have no authority vested in them to coerce or censure either way. Their attitude toward the Houses must always be that of deference; their language that of respect, if not submission. Still more must their attitude and language toward the Sovereign be the same in principle, and yet more marked in form; and this, though upon them lies the ultimate responsibility of deciding what shall be done in the Crown's name in every branch of administration, and every department of policy, coupled only with the alternative of ceasing to be Ministers, if what they may advisedly deem the requisite power of action be denied them.

In the ordinary administration of the government, the Sovereign personally is, so to speak, behind the scenes; performing, indeed,

many personal acts by the Sign-manual, or otherwise, but, in each and all of them, covered by the counter-signature or advice of Ministers, who stand between the august Personage and the people. There is, accordingly, no more power, under the form of our Constitution, to assail the Monarch in his personal capacity, or to assail through him, the line of succession to the Crown, than there is at chess to put the king in check. In truth, a good deal, though by no means the whole, of the philosophy of the British Constitution is represented in this central point of the wonderful game, against which the only reproach—the reproach of Lord Bacon—is that it is hardly a relaxation, but rather a serious tax upon the brain.

The Sovereign in England is the symbol of the nation's unity, and the apex of the social structure; the maker (with advice) of the laws; the supreme governor of the Church; the fountain of justice; the sole source of honor; the person to whom all military, all naval, all civil service is rendered. The Sovereign owns very large properties; receives and holds, in law, the entire revenue of the State; appoints and dismisses Ministers; makes treaties; pardons crime, or abates its punishment; wages war, or concludes

peace; summons and dissolves the Parliament; exercises these vast powers for the most part without any specified restraint of law; and yet enjoys, in regard to these and every other function, an absolute immunity from consequences. There is no provision in the law of the United Empire, or in the machinery of the Constitution, for calling the Sovereign to account; and only in one solitary and improbable, but perfectly defined, case—that of his submitting to the jurisdiction of the Pope—is he deprived by Statute of the Throne. Setting aside that peculiar exception, the offspring of a necessity still freshly felt when it was made, the Constitution might seem to be founded on the belief of a real infallibility in its head. Less, at any rate, cannot be said than this. Regal right has, since the Revolution of 1688, been expressly founded upon contract; and the breach of that contract destroys the title to the allegiance of the subject. But no provision, other than the general rule of hereditary succession, is made to meet either this case, or any other form of political miscarriage or misdeed. It seems as though the Genius of the Nation would not stain its lips by so much as the mere utterance of such a word; nor can we put this

state of facts into language more justly than by saying that the Constitution would regard the default of the Monarch, with his heirs, as the chaos of the State, and would simply trust to the inherent energies of the several orders of society for its legal reconstruction.

The original authorship of the representative system is commonly accorded to the English race. More clear and indisputable is its title to the great political discovery of Constitutional Kingship. And a very great discovery it is. Whether it is destined, in any future day, to minister in its integrity to the needs of the New World, it may be hard to say. In that important branch of its utility which is negative, it completely serves the purposes of the many strong and rising Colonies of Great Britain, and saves them all the perplexities and perils attendant upon successions to the headship of the Executive. It presents to them, as it does to us, the symbol of unity, and the object of all our political veneration, which we love to find rather in a person, than in an abstract entity, like the State. But the Old World, at any rate, still is, and may long continue, to constitute the living centre of civilization, and to hold the primacy of the race; and

of this great society the several members approximate, in a rapidly extending series, to the practice and idea of Constitutional Kingship. The chief States of Christendom, with only two exceptions, have, with more or less distinctness, adopted it. Many of them, both great and small, have thoroughly assimilated it to their system. The autocracy of Russia, and the Republic of France, each of them congenial to the present wants of the respective countries, may yet, hereafter, gravitate toward the principle, which elsewhere has developed so large an attractive power. Should the current, that has prevailed through the last half-century, maintain its direction and its strength, another fifty years may see all Europe adhering to the theory and practice of this beneficent institution, and peaceably sailing in the wake of England.

No doubt, if tried by an ideal standard, it is open to criticism. Aristotle and Plato, nay, Bacon, and perhaps Leibnitz, would have scouted it as a scientific abortion. Some men would draw disparaging comparisons between the mediæval and the modern King. In the person of the first was normally embodied the force paramount over all others in the country, and on him was laid a weight of responsibility

and toil so tremendous, that his function seems always to border upon the superhuman; that his life commonly wore out before the natural term; and that an indescribable majesty, dignity, and interest surround him in his misfortunes, nay, almost in his degradation; as, for instance, amidst

> "The shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roof that ring,
> Shrieks of an agonizing King."[1]

For this concentration of power, toil, and liability, milder realities have now been substituted; and Ministerial responsibility comes between the Monarch and every public trial and necessity, like armor between the flesh and the spear that would seek to pierce it; only this is an armor itself also fleshy, at once living and impregnable. It may be said, by an adverse critic, that the Constitutional Monarch is only a depository of power, as an armory is a depository of arms; but that those who wield the arms, and those alone, constitute the true governing authority. And no doubt this is so far true, that the scheme aims at associating in the work of government with the head of the State the persons best adapted

[1] Gray's "Bard."

to meet the wants and wishes of the people, under the conditions that the several aspects of supreme power shall be severally allotted; dignity and visible authority shall lie wholly with the wearer of the crown, but labor mainly, and responsibility wholly, with its servants. From hence, without doubt, it follows that should differences arise, it is the will of those in whose minds the work of government is elaborated, that in the last resort must prevail. From mere labor, power may be severed; but not from labor joined with responsibility. This capital and vital consequence flows out of the principle that the political action of the Monarch shall everywhere be mediate and conditional upon the concurrence of confidential advisers. It is impossible to reconcile any, even the smallest, abatement of this doctrine, with the perfect, absolute immunity of the Sovereign from consequences. There can be in England no disloyalty more gross, as to its effects, than the superstition which affects to assign to the Sovereign a separate, and so far as separate, transcendental sphere of political action. Anonymous servility has, indeed, in these last days, hinted such a doctrine [1]; but it

[1] *Quarterly Review*, April, 1878, Art. I.

is no more practicable to make it thrive in England, than to rear the jungles of Bengal on Salisbury Plain.

There is, indeed, one great and critical act, the responsibility for which falls momentarily or provisionally upon the Sovereign; it is the dismissal of an existing Ministry, and the appointment of a new one. This act is usually performed with the aid drawn from authentic manifestations of public opinion, mostly such as are obtained through the votes or conduct of the House of Commons. Since the reign of George III there has been but one change of Ministry in which the Monarch acted without the support of these indications. It was when William IV, in 1834, dismissed the Government of Lord Melbourne, which was known to be supported, though after a lukewarm fashion, by a large majority of the existing House of Commons. But the royal responsibility was, according to the doctrine of our Constitution, completely taken over, *ex post facto*, by Sir Robert Peel, as the person who consented, on the call of the King, to take Lord Melbourne's office. Thus, though the act was rash, and hard to justify, the doctrine of personal immunity was in no way endangered. And here we may

notice, that in theory an absolute personal immunity implies a correlative limitation of power, greater than is always found in practice. It can hardly be said that the King's initiative left to Sir R. Peel a freedom perfectly unimpaired. And, most certainly, it was a very real exercise of personal power. The power did not suffice for its end, which was to overset the Liberal predominance; but it very nearly sufficed. Unconditionally entitled to dismiss the Ministers, the Sovereign can, of course, choose his own opportunity. He may defy the Parliament, if he can count upon the people. William IV, in the year 1834, had neither Parliament nor people with him. His act was within the limits of the Constitution, for it was covered by the responsibility of the acceding Ministry. But it reduced the Liberal majority from a number considerably beyond three hundred to about thirty; and it constituted an exceptional but very real and large action on the politics of the country, by the direct will of the King. I speak of the immediate effects. Its eventual result may have been different, for it converted a large disjointed mass into a smaller but organized and sufficient force, which held the fortress of power for the six

years 1835–41. On this view it may be said that, if the Royal intervention anticipated and averted decay from natural causes, then with all its immediate success, it defeated its own real aim.

But this power of dismissing a Ministry at will, large as it may be under given circumstances, is neither the safest nor the only power which, in the ordinary course of things, falls Constitutionally to the personal share of the wearer of the crown. He is entitled, on all subjects coming before the Ministry, to knowledge and opportunities of discussion, unlimited save by the iron necessities of business. Though decisions must ultimately conform to the sense of those who are to be responsible for them, yet their business is to inform and persuade the Sovereign, not to overrule him. Were it possible for him, within the limits of human time and strength, to enter actively into all public transactions, he would be fully entitled to do so. What is actually submitted is supposed to be the most fruitful and important part, the cream of affairs. In the discussion of them, the Monarch has more than one advantage over his advisers. He is permanent, they are fugitive; he speaks from the vantage-

ground of a station unapproachably higher; he takes a calm and leisurely survey, while they are worried with the preparatory stages, and their force is often impaired by the pressure of countless detail. He may be, therefore, a weighty factor in all deliberations of State. Every discovery of a blot, that the studies of the Sovereign in the domain of business enable him to make, strengthens his hands and enhances his authority. It is plain, then, that there is abundant scope for mental activity to be at work under the gorgeous robes of Royalty.

This power spontaneously takes the form of influence; and the amount of it depends on a variety of circumstances; on talent, experience, tact, weight of character, steady, untiring industry, and habitual presence at the seat of government. In proportion as any of these might fail, the real and legitimate influence of the Monarch over the course of affairs would diminish; in proportion as they attain to fuller action, it would increase. It is a moral, not a coercive, influence. It operates through the will and reason of the Ministry, not over or against them. It would be an evil and a perilous day for the Monarchy, were any prospective

possessor of the Crown to assume or claim for himself final, or preponderating, or even independent power, in any one department of the State. The ideas and practice of the time of George III, whose will in certain matters limited the action of the Ministers, cannot be revived, otherwise than by what would be, on their part, nothing less than a base compliance, a shameful subserviency, dangerous to the public weal, and in the highest degree disloyal to the dynasty. Because, in every free State, for every public act, some one must be responsible; and the question is, Who shall it be? The British Constitution answers: The Minister, and the Minister exclusively. That he may be responsible, all action must be fully shared by him. Sole action, for the Sovereign, would mean undefended, unprotected action; the armor of irresponsibility would not cover the whole body against sword or spear; a head would project beyond the awning, and would invite a sunstroke.

The reader, then, will clearly see that there is no distinction more vital to the practice of the British Constitution, or to a right judgment upon it, than the distinction between the Sovereign and the Crown. The Crown has

large prerogatives, endless functions essential to the daily action, and even the life, of the State. To place them in the hands of persons who should be mere tools in a Royal will, would expose those powers to constant unsupported collision with the living forces of the nation, and to a certain and irremediable crash. They are therefore entrusted to men, who must be prepared to answer for the use they make of them. This ring of responsible Ministerial agency forms a fence around the person of the Sovereign, which has thus far proved impregnable to all assaults. The august personage, who from time to time may rest within it, and who may possess the art of turning to the best account the countless resources of the position, is no dumb and senseless idol; but, together with real and very large means of influence upon policy, enjoys the undivided reverence which a great people feels for its head; and is likewise the first and by far the weightiest among the forces, which greatly mould, by example and legitimate authority, the manners, nay the morals, of a powerful aristocracy and a wealthy and highly trained society. The social influence of a Sovereign, even if it stood alone, would be an enormous attribute. The English

people are not believers in equality; they do not, with the famous Declaration of July 4, 1776, think it to be a self-evident truth that all men are born equal. They hold rather the reverse of that proposition. At any rate, in practice, they are what I may call determined inequalitarians; nay, in some cases, even without knowing it. Their natural tendency, from the very base of British society, and through all its strongly built gradations, is to look upward: they are not apt to "untune degree." The Sovereign is the highest height of the system; is, in that system, like Jupiter among the Roman gods, first without a second.

"Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum."[1]

Not, like Mont Blanc, with rivals in his neighborhood; but like Ararat or Etna, towering alone and unapproachable. The step downward from the King to the second person in the realm is not like that from the second to the third: it is more even than a stride, for it traverses a gulf. It is the wisdom of the British Constitution to lodge the personality of its chief so high, that none shall under any circumstances be tempted to vie, no, nor dream of vie-

[1] Hor. Od., I, xii, 18.

ing, with it. The office, however, is not confused, though it is associated, with the person; and the elevation of official dignity in the Monarch of these realms has now for a testing period worked well, in conjunction with the limitation of merely personal power.

In the face of the country, the Sovereign and the Ministers are an absolute unity. The one may concede to the other; but the limit of concessions by the Sovereign is at the point where he becomes willing to try the experiment of changing his Government, and the limit of concessions by the Minister is at the point where they become unwilling to bear, what in all circumstances they must bear while they remain Ministers, the undivided responsibility of all that is done in the Crown's name. But it is not with the Sovereign only that the Ministry must be welded into identity. It has a relation to sustain to the House of Lords; which need not, however, be one of entire unity, for the House of Lords, though a great power in the State, and able to cause great embarrassment to an Administration, is not able by a vote to doom it to capital punishment. Only for fifteen years, out of the last fifty, has the Ministry of the day possessed the confidence of the

House of Lords. On the confidence of the House of Commons it is immediately and vitally dependent. This confidence it must always possess, either absolutely from identity of political color, or relatively and conditionally. This last case arises when an accidental dislocation of the majority in the Chamber has put the machine for the moment out of gear, and the unsafe experiment of a sort of provisional government, doomed on the one hand to be feeble, or tempted on the other to be dishonest, is tried; much as the Roman Conclave has sometimes been satisfied with a provisional Pope, deemed likely to live for the time necessary to reunite the factions of the prevailing party.

I have said that the Cabinet is essentially the regulator of the relations between King, Lords, and Commons; exercising functionally the powers of the first, and incorporated, in the persons of its members, with the second and the third. It is, therefore, itself a great power. But let no one suppose it is the greatest. In a balance nicely poised, a small weight may turn the scale; and the helm that directs the ship is not stronger than the ship. It is a cardinal axiom of the modern British Constitution, that the House of Commons is the greatest of the

powers of the State. It might, by a base subserviency, fling itself at the feet of a Monarch or a Minister; it might, in a season of exhaustion, allow the slow persistence of the Lords, ever eyeing it as Lancelot was eyed by Modred, to invade its just province by baffling its action at some time propitious for the purpose. But no Constitution can anywhere keep either Sovereign, or Assembly, or nation, true to its trust and to itself. All that can be done has been done. The Commons are armed with ample powers of self-defence. If they use their powers properly, they can only be mastered by a recurrence to the people, and the way in which the appeal can succeed is by the choice of another House of Commons more agreeable to the national temper. Thus the sole appeal from the verdict of the House is a rightful appeal to those from whom it received its commission.

This superiority in power among the great State forces was, in truth, established even before the House of Commons became what it now is, representative of the people throughout its entire area. In the early part of the century, a large part of its members virtually received their mandate from members of the Peerage, or from the Crown, or by the direct

action of money on a mere handful of individuals, or, as in Scotland, for example, from constituencies whose limited numbers and upper-class sympathies usually shut out popular influences. A real supremacy belonged to the House as a whole; but the forces of which it was compounded were not all derived from the people, and the aristocratic power had found out the secret of asserting itself within the walls of the popular chamber, in the dress and through the voices of its members. Many persons of gravity and weight saw great danger in a measure of change like the first Reform Act, which left it to the Lords to assert themselves, thereafter, by an external force, instead of through a share in the internal composition of a body so formidable. But the result proved that they were sufficiently to exercise, through the popular will and choice, the power which they had formerly put in action without its sanction, though within its proper precinct and with its title falsely inscribed.

The House of Commons is superior, and by far superior, in the force of its political attributes, to any other single power in the State. But it is watched; it is criticized; it is hemmed in and about by a multitude of other forces:

the force, first of all, of the House of Lords, the force of opinion from day to day, particularly of the highly anti-popular opinion of the leisured men of the metropolis, who, seated close to the scene of action, wield an influence greatly in excess of their just claims; the force of the classes and professions; the just and useful force of the local authorities in their various orders and places. Never was the great problem more securely solved, which recognizes the necessity of a paramount power in the body politic to enable it to move, but requires for it a depository such that it shall be safe against invasion, and yet inhibited from agression.

The old theories of a mixed government, and of the three powers, coming down from the age of Cicero, when set by the side of the living British Constitution, are cold, crude, and insufficient to a degree that makes them deceptive. Take them, for example, as represented, fairly enough, by Voltaire: the picture drawn by him is for us nothing but a puzzle:—

> "Aux murs de Vestminster on voit paraître ensemble
> Trois pouvoirs étonnés du nœud qui les rassemble,
> Les députés du peuple, les grands, et le Roi,
> Divisés d'intérêt, réunis par la Loi."[1]

[1] Henriade, I.

There is here lacking an amalgam, a reconciling power, what may be called a clearing-house of political forces, which shall draw into itself every thing, and shall balance and adjust every thing, and ascertaining the nett result, let it pass on freely for the fulfilment of the purposes of the great social union. Like a stout buffer-spring, it receives all shocks, and within it their opposing elements neutralize one another. This is the function of the British Cabinet. It is perhaps the most curious formation in the political world of modern times, not for its dignity, but for its subtlety, its elasticity, and its many-sided diversity of power. It is the complement of the entire system; a system which appears to want nothing but a thorough loyalty in the persons composing its several parts, with a reasonable intelligence, to insure its bearing, without fatal damage, the wear and tear of ages yet to come.

It has taken more than a couple of centuries to bring the British Cabinet to its present accuracy and fulness of development; for the first rudiments of it may sufficiently be discerned in the reign of Charles I. Under Charles II it had fairly started from its embryo; and the name is found both in Clarendon and in the Diary of

Pepys.[1] It was for a long time without a Ministerial head; the King was the head. While this arrangement subsisted, constitutional government could be but half established. Of the numerous titles of the Revolution of 1688 to respect, not the least remarkable is this, that the great families of the country, and great powers of the State, made no effort, as they might have done, in the hour of its weakness, to aggrandize themselves at the expense of the crown. Nevertheless, for various reasons, and among them because of the foreign origin, and absences from time time, of several Sovereigns, the course of events tended to give force to the organs of Government actually on the spot, and thus to consolidate, and also to uplift, this as yet novel creation. So late, however, as the impeachment of Sir Robert Walpole, his friends thought it expedient to urge on his behalf, in the House of Lords, that he had never presumed to constitute himself a Prime-Minister.

The breaking down of the great offices of State by throwing them into commission, and last among them of the Lord High Treasurership after the time of Harley, Earl of Oxford, tended, and may probably have been meant, to

[1] Vol. v, pp. 94, 95. Ed. London, 1877.

prevent or retard the formation of a recognized Chiefship in the Ministry; which even now we have not learned to designate by a true English word, though the use of the imported phrase "Premier" is at least as old as the poetry of Burns. Nor can any thing be more curiously characteristic of the political genius of the people, than the present position of this most important official personage. Departmentally, he is no more than the first-named of five persons, by whom jointly the powers of the Lord Treasurership are taken to be exercised; he is not their master, or, otherwise than by mere priority, their head: and he has no special function or prerogative under the formal constitution of the office. He has no official rank except that of Privy Councillor. Eight members of the Cabinet, including five Secretaries of State, and several other members of the Government, take official precedence of him. His rights and duties as head of the Administration are nowhere recorded. He is almost, if not altogether, unknown to the Statute Law.

Nor is the position of the body, over which he presides, less singular than his own. The Cabinet wields, with partial exceptions, the powers of the Privy Council, besides having a

standing ground in relation to the personal will of the Sovereign, far beyond what the Privy Council ever held or claimed. Yet it has no connection with the Privy Council, except that every one, on first becoming a member of the Cabinet, is, if not belonging to it already, sworn a member of that body. There are other sections of the Privy Council, forming regular Committees for Education and for Trade. But the Cabinet has not even this degree of formal sanction, to sustain its existence. It lives and acts simply by understanding, without a single line of written law or constitution to determine its relations to the Monarch, or to the Parliament, or to the nation; or the relations of its members to one another, or to their head. It sits in the closest secrecy. There is no record of its proceedings, nor is there any one to hear them, except upon the very rare occasions when some important functionary, for the most part military or legal, is introduced, *pro hac vice*, for the purpose of giving to it necessary information.

Every one of its members acts in no less than three capacities: as administrator of a department of State; as member of a legislative chamber; and as a confidential adviser of the Crown.

Two at least of them add to those three characters a fourth; for in each House of Parliament it is indispensable that one of the principal Ministers should be what is termed its Leader. This is an office the most indefinite of all, but not the least important. With very little of defined prerogative, the Leader suggests, and in a great degree fixes, the course of all principal matters of business, supervises and keeps in harmony the action of his colleagues, takes the initiative in matters of ceremonial procedure, and advises the House in every difficulty as it arises. The first of these, which would be of but secondary consequence where the assembly had time enough for all its duties, is of the utmost weight in our overcharged House of Commons, where, notwithstanding all its energy and all its diligence, for one thing of consequence that is done, five or ten are despairingly postponed. The overweight, again, of the House of Commons is apt, other things being equal, to bring its Leader inconveniently near in power to a Prime-Minister who is a Peer. He can play off the House of Commons against his chief; and instances might be cited, though they are happily most rare, when he has served him very ugly tricks.

The nicest of all the adjustments involved in the working of the British Government is that which determines, without formally defining, the internal relations of the Cabinet. On the one hand, while each Minister is an adviser of the Crown, the Cabinet is a unity, and none of its members can advise as an individual, without, or in opposition actual or presumed to, his colleagues. On the other hand, the business of the State is a hundred-fold too great in volume to allow of the actual passing of the whole under the view of the collected Ministry. It is therefore a prime office of discretion for each Minister to settle what are the departmental acts in which he can presume the concurrence of his colleagues, and in what more delicate, or weighty, or peculiar cases, he must positively ascertain it. So much for the relation of each Minister to the Cabinet; but here we touch the point which involves another relation, perhaps the least known of all, his relation to its head.

The head of the British Government is not a Grand Vizier. He has no powers, properly so called, over his colleagues: on the rare occasions, when a Cabinet determines its course by the votes of its members, his vote counts only as

one of theirs. But they are appointed and dismissed by the Sovereign on his advice. In a perfectly organized administration, such for example as was that of Sir Robert Peel in 1841–6, nothing of great importance is matured, or would even be projected, in any department without his personal cognizance; and any weighty business would commonly go to him before being submitted to the Cabinet. He reports to the Sovereign its proceedings, and he also has many audiences of the august occupant of the Throne. He is bound in these reports and audiences, not to counterwork the Cabinet; not to divide it; not to undermine the position of any of his colleagues in the Royal favor. If he departs in any degree from strict adherence to these rules, and uses his great opportuuities to increase his own influence, or pursue aims not shared by his colleagues, then, unless he is prepared to advise their dismissal, he not only departs from rule, but commits an act of treachery and baseness. As the Cabinet stands between the Sovereign and the Parliament, and is bound to be loyal to both, so he stands between his colleagues and the Sovereign, and is bound to be loyal to both.

As a rule, the resignation of the First Minister, as if removing the bond of cohesion in the Cabinet, has the effect of dissolving it. A conspicuous instance of this was furnished by Sir Robert Peel in 1846; when the dissolution of the Administration, after it had carried the repeal of the Corn Laws, was understood to be due not so much to a united deliberation and decision as to his initiative. The resignation of any other Minister only creates a vacancy. In certain circumstances, the balance of forces may be so delicate and susceptible that a single resignation will break up the Government; but what is the rule in the one case is the rare exception in the other The Prime Minister has no title to override any one of his colleagues in any one of the departments. So far as he governs them, unless it is done by trick, which is not to be supposed, he governs them by influence only. But upon the whole, nowhere in the wide world does so great a substance cast so small a shadow; nowhere is there a man who has so much power, with so little to show for it in the way of formal title or perogative.

The slight record that has here been traced may convey but a faint idea of an unique creation. And, slight as it is, I believe it tells more

than, except in the school of British practice, is elsewhere to be learned of a machine so subtly balanced, that it seems as though it were moved by something not less delicate and slight than the mainspring of a watch. It has not been the offspring of the thought of man. The Cabinet, and all the present relations of the Constitutional powers in this country, have grown into their present dimensions, and settled into their present places, not as the fruit of a philosophy, not in the effort to give effect to an abstract principle; but by the silent action of forces, invisible and insensible, the structure has come up into the view of all the world. It is, perhaps, the most conspicuous object on the wide political horizon; but it has thus risen, without noise, like the temple of Jerusalem.

> "No workman steel, no ponderous hammers rung;
> Like some tall palm the stately fabric sprung." [1]

When men repeat the proverb which teaches us that "marriages are made in heaven," what they mean is that, in the most fundamental of all social operations, the building up of the family, the issues involved in the nuptial contract, lie beyond the best exercise of human

[1] Heber's "Palestine." The word "stately" was in later editions altered by the author to "noiseless."

thought, and the unseen forces of providential government make good the defect in our imperfect capacity. Even so would it seem to have been in that curious marriage of competing influences and powers, which brings about the composite harmony of the British Constitution. More, it must be admitted, than any other, it leaves open doors which lead into blind alleys; for it presumes, more boldly than any other, the good sense and good faith of those who work it. If, unhappily, these personages meet together, on the great arena of a nation's fortunes, as jockeys meet upon a racecourse, each to urge to the uttermost, as against the others, the power of the animal he rides; or as counsel in a court, each to procure the victory of his client; without respect to any other interest or right: then this boasted Constitution of ours is neither more nor less than a heap of absurdities. The undoubted competency of each reaches even to the paralysis or destruction of the rest. The House of Commons is entitled to refuse every shilling of the supplies. That House, and also the House of Lords, is entitled to refuse its assent to every bill presented to it. The Crown is entitled to make a thousand Peers to-day and as many to-morrow: it may desolve

all and every Parliament before it proceeds to business; may pardon the most atrocious crimes; may declare war against all the world; may conclude treaties involving unlimited responsibilities, and even vast expenditure, without the consent, nay, without the knowledge, of Parliament, and this not merely in support or in development, but in reversal, of policy already known to and sanctioned by the nation. But the assumption is that the depositaries of power will all respect one another; will evince a consciousness that they are working in a common interest for a common end; that they will be possessed, together with not less than an average intelligence, not less than an average sense of equity and of the public interest and rights. When these reasonable expectations fail, then, it must be admitted, the British Constitution will be in danger.

Apart from such contingencies, the offspring only of folly or of crime, this Constitution is peculiarly liable to subtle change. Not only in the long run, as man changes between youth and age, but also, like the human body, with a quotidian life, a periodical recurrence of ebbing and flowing tides. Its old particles daily run to waste, and give place to new. What is

hoped among us is, that which has usually been found, that evils will become palpable before they have grown to be intolerable.

There cannot, for example, be much doubt among careful observers that the great conservator of liberty in all former times, namely, the confinement of the power of the purse to the popular chamber, has been lamentably weakened in its efficiency of late years; weakened in the House of Commons, and weakened by the House of Commons. It might indeed be contended that the House of Commons of the present epoch does far more to increase the aggregate of public charge than to reduce it. It might even be a question whether the public would take benefit if the House were either intrusted annually with a great part of the initiative, so as to be really responsible to the people for the spending of their money; or else were excluded from part at least of its direct action upon expenditure, intrusting to the executive the application of given sums which that executive should have no legal power to exceed.

Meantime, we of this island are not great political philosophers; and we contend with an earnest, but disproportioned, vehemence about changes which are palpable, such as the extension of the suffrage, or the redistribution of

Parliamentary seats, neglecting wholly other processes of change which work beneath the surface, and in the dark, but which are even more fertile of great organic results. The modern English character reflects the English Constitution in this, that it abounds in paradox; that it possesses every strength; but holds it tainted with every weakness; that it seems alternately both to rise above and to fall below the standard of average humanity; that there is no allegation of praise or blame which, in some one of the aspects of its many-sided formation, it does not deserve; that only in the midst of much default, and much transgression, the people of this United Kingdom either have heretofore established, or will hereafter establish, their title to be reckoned among the children of men, for the eldest born of an imperial race.

In this imperfect survey, I have carefully avoided all reference to the politics of the day and to particular topics, recently opened, which may have undergone a great development even before these lines appear in print on the other side of the Atlantic. Such reference would, without any countervailing advantage, have lowered the strain of these remarks, and would have complicated with painful considerations a statement essentially impartial and general in its scope.

For the yet weightier reason of incompetency, I have avoided the topics of chief present interest in America, including that proposal to tamper with the true monetary creed which (as we should say) the Tempter lately presented to the Nation in the Silver Bill. But I will not close this paper without recording my conviction that the great acts, and the great forbearances, which immediately followed the close of the Civil War form a group which will ever be a noble object, in his political retrospect, to the impartial historian; and that, proceeding as they did from the free choice and conviction of the people, and founded as they were on the very principles of which the multitude is supposed to be least tolerant, they have, in doing honor to the United States, also rendered a splendid service to the general cause of popular government throughout the world.[1]

[1] [In reply to the intended work of Mr. Adams on the Constitution of the United States, Mr. Livingstone, under the title of a Colonist of New Jersey, published an Examination of the British Constitution, and compared it unfavorably as it had been exhibited by Adams, and by Delolme, with the institutions of his own country. In this work, of which I have a French translation (London and Paris, 1789), there is not the smallest inkling of the action of our political mechanism, such as I have endeavored to describe it. On this subject I need hardly refer the reader to the valuable work of Mr. Bagehot, entitled "The English Constitution," or to the Constitutional History of Sir T. Erskine May.—W. E. G., December, 1878.]

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

BORN 1801.

PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

By JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

THERE is this obvious, undeniable difficulty in the attempt to form a theory of Private Judgment, in the choice of a religion, that Private Judgment leads different minds in such different directions. If, indeed, there be no religious truth, or at least no sufficient means of arriving at it, then the difficulty vanishes: for where there is nothing to find, there can be no rules for seeking, and contradiction in the result is but a *reductio ad absurdum* of the attempt. But such a conclusion is intolerable to those who search, else they would not search; and therefore on them the obligation lies to explain, if they can, how it comes to pass, that Private Judgment is a duty, and an advantage, and a success, considering it leads the way not only to their own faith, whatever that may be, but to opinions which are diametrically opposite to it; considering it not only leads them right, but leads others wrong, landing them as it may

be in the Church of Rome, or in the Wesleyan Connection, or in the Society of Friends.

Are exercises of mind, which end so diversely, one and all pleasing to the Divine Author of faith; or rather must they not contain some inherent or some incidental defect, since they manifest such divergence? Must private judgment in all cases be a good *per se;* or is it a good under circumstances, and with limitations? Or is it a good, only when it is not an evil? Or is it a good and evil at once, a good involving an evil? Or is it an absolute and simple evil? Questions of this sort rise in the mind on contemplating a principle which leads to more than the thirty-two points of the compass, and, in consequence, whatever we may here be able to do, in the way of giving plain rules for its exercise, be it greater or less, will be so much gain.

I.

Now the first remark which occurs is an obvious one, and, we suppose, will be suffered to pass without much opposition, that whatever be the intrinsic merits of Private Judgment, yet, if it at all exerts itself in the direction of proselytism and conversion, a certain *onus probandi* lies upon it, and it must show cause why

it should be tolerated, and not rather treated as a breach of the peace, and silenced *instanter* as a mere disturber of the existing constitution of things. Of course it may be safely exercised in defending what is established; and we are far indeed from saying that it is never to advance in the direction of change or revolution, else the Gospel itself could never have been introduced; but we consider that serious religious changes have a *primâ facie* case against them; they have something to get over, and have to prove their admissibility, before it can reasonably be allowed; and their agents may be called upon to suffer, in order to prove their earnestness, and to pay the penalty of the trouble they are causing. Considering the special countenance given in Scripture to quiet, unanimity, and contentedness, and the warnings directed against disorder, insubordination, changeableness, discord, and division; considering the emphatic words of the Apostle, laid down by him as a general principle, and illustrated in detail, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called"; considering, in a word, that change is really the characteristic of error, and unalterableness the attribute of truth, of holiness, of Almighty God Him-

self, we consider that when Private Judgment moves in the direction of innovation, it may well be regarded at first with suspicion and treated with severity. Nay, we confess even a satisfaction, when a penalty is attached to the expression of new doctrines, or to a change of communion. We repeat it, if any men have strong feelings, they should pay for them; if they think it a duty to unsettle things established, they show their earnestness by being willing to suffer. We shall be the last to complain of this kind of persecution, even though directed against what we consider the cause of truth. Such disadvantages do no harm to that cause in the event, but they bring home to a man's mind his own responsibility; they are a memento to him of a great moral law, and warn him that his private judgment, if not a duty, is a sin.

An act of private judgment is, in its very idea, an act of individual responsibility; this is a consideration which will come with especial force on a conscientious mind, when it is to have so fearful an issue as a change of religion. A religious man will say to himself, "If I am in error at present, I am in error by a disposition of Providence, which has placed me where

I am; if I change into an error, this is my own act. It is much less fearful to be born at disadvantage, than to place myself at disadvantage."

And if the voice of men in general is to weigh at all in a matter of this kind, it does but corroborate these instinctive feelings. A convert is undeniably in favor with no party; he is looked at with distrust, contempt, and aversion by all. His former friends think him a good riddance, and his new friends are cold and strange; and as to the impartial public, their very first impulse is to impute the change to some eccentricity of character, or fickleness of mind, or tender attachment, or private interest. Their utmost praise is the reluctant confession that "doubtless he is very sincere." Churchmen and Dissenters, men of Rome and men of the Kirk, are equally subject to this remark. Not on extraordinary occasions only, but as a matter of course, whenever the news of a conversion to Romanism, or to Irvingism, or to the Plymouth Sect, or to Unitarianism, is brought to us, we say, one and all of us: "No wonder, such a one has lived so long abroad"; or, "he is of such a very imaginative turn"; or, "he is so excitable and odd"; or, "what could he do? all his family turned"; or, "it was a re-action

in consequence of an injudicious education"; or, "trade makes men cold," or "a little learning makes them shallow in their religion." If, then, the common voice of mankind goes for any thing, must we not consider it to be the *rule* that men change their religion, not on reason, but for some extra-rational feeling or motive? else, the world would not so speak.

Now, for ourselves, we are not quarrelling with this testimony,—we are willing to resign ourselves to it; but we think there are parties whom it concerns much to ponder it. Surely it is a strong, and, as they ought to feel, an alarming proof, that, for all the haranguing and protesting which goes on in Exeter and other halls, this great people is not such a conscientious supporter of the sacred right of Private Judgment as a good Protestant would desire. Why should we go out of our way, one and all of us, to impute personal motives in explanation of the conversion of every individual convert, as he comes before us, if there were in us, the public, an adhesion to that absolute, and universal, and unalienable principle, as its titles are set forth in heraldic style, high and broad, sacred and awful, the right, and the duty, and the possibility of Private

Judgment? Why should we confess it in the general, yet promptly and pointedly deny it in every particular, if our hearts retained more than the "magni nominis umbra," when we preached up the Protestant principle? Is it not sheer wantonness and cruelty in Baptist, Independent, Irvingite, Wesleyan, Establishment-man, Jumper, and Mormonite, to delight in trampling on and crushing these manifestations of their own pure and precious charter, instead of dutifully and reverently exalting, at Bethel, or at Dan, each instance of it, as it occurs, to the gaze of its professing votaries? If a staunch Protestant's daughter turns Roman, and betakes herself to a convent, why does he not exult in the occurrence? Why does he not give a public breakfast, or hold a meeting, or erect a memorial, or write a pamphlet in honor of her, and of the great undying principle she has so gloriously vindicated? Why is he in this base, disloyal style, muttering about priests, and Jesuits, and the horrors of nunneries, in solution of the phenomenon, when he has the fair and ample form of Private Judgment rising before his eyes, and pleading with him, and bidding him impute good motives, not bad, and in very charity ascribe to the in-

fluence of a high and holy principle, to a right and a duty of every member of the family of man, what his poor human instincts are fain to set down as a folly or a sin. All this would lead us to suspect that the doctrine of private judgment, in its simplicity, purity, and integrity,—private judgment, all private judgment, and nothing but private judgment,—is held by very few persons indeed; and that the great mass of the population are either stark unbelievers in it, or deplorably dark about it; and that even the minority who are in a manner faithful to it, have glossed and corrupted the true sense of it by a miserably faulty reading, and hold, not the right of private judgment, but the private right of judgment; in other words, their own private right, and no one's else. To us it seems as clear as day, that they consider that they themselves, indeed, individually can and do act on reason, and on nothing but reason; that they have the gift of advancing, without bias or unsteadiness, throughout their search, from premise to conclusion, from text to doctrine; that they have sought aright, and no one else, who does not agree with them; that they alone have found out the art of putting the salt upon the bird's

tail, and have rescued themselves from being the slaves of circumstance and the creatures of impulse. It is undeniable, then, if the popular feeling is to be our guide, that, high and mighty as the principle of private judgment is in religious inquiries, as we most fully grant it is, still it bears some similarity to Saul's armor which David rejected, or to edged tools which have a bad trick of chopping at our fingers, when we are but simply and innocently meaning them to make a dash forward at truth.

Any tolerably serious man will feel this in his own case more vividly than in that of any one else. Who can know ever so little of himself without suspecting all kinds of imperfect and wrong motives in every thing he attempts? And then there is the bias of education and of habit; and, added to the difficulties thence resulting, those which arise from weakness of the reasoning faculty; ignorance or imperfect knowledge of the original languages of Scripture, and again, of history and antiquity. These things being considered, we lay it down as a truth, about which, we think, few ought to doubt, that Divine aid alone can carry any one safely and successfully through an inquiry after

religious truth. That there are certain very broad contrasts between one religion and another, in which no one would be at fault what to think and what to choose, is very certain; but the problem proposed to private judgment at this day, is of a rather more complicated nature. Taking things as they are, we all seem to be in Solomon's case, when he said, "I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in; and Thy servant is in the midst of a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, Thy servant an understanding heart, that I may discern between good and bad." It is useless, surely, attempting to inquire or judge, unless a Divine command enjoin the work upon us, and a Divine promise sustain us through it. Supposing, indeed, such a command and promise be given, then, of course, there is no difficulty in the matter. Whatever be our personal infirmities, He whom we serve can overrule or supersede them. An act of duty must always be right; and will be accepted, whatever be its success, because done in obedience to His will. And he can bless the most unpromising circumstances; He can even lead us forward by means of our mistakes; He can turn our mistakes into a revela-

tion; He can convert us, if He will, through the very obstinacy, or self-will, or superstition, which mixes itself up with our better feelings, and defiles, yet is sanctified by our sincerity. And much more can He shed upon our path supernatural light, if He so will, and give us an insight into the meaning of Scripture, and a hold of the sense of Antiquity, to which our own unaided powers never could have attained.

All this is certain: He continually leads us forward in the midst of darkness; and we live, not by bread only, but by His Word converting the hard rock or salt sea into nourishment. The simple question is, *has* He, in this particular case, commanded? has He promised? and how far? If He has, and as far as He has, all is easy; if He has not, all is, we will not say, impossible, but what is worse, undutiful or presumptuous. Our business is to ask with St. Paul, when arrested in the midst of his frenzy, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This is the simple question. He can bless our present state; He can bless our change; *which* is it His will to bless? If Wesleyan or Independent has come over to us apart from this spirit, we do not much pride ourselves in our convert. If he joins us because he thinks he has a right to

judge for himself, or because forms are of no consequence, or merely because sectarianism has its errors and inconveniences, or because an Established Church is an efficacious means of spreading religion, he plainly thinks that the choice of a communion is not a more serious matter than the choice of a neighborhood or of an insurance office. In like manner, if members of our communion have left it for Rome, because of the *æsthetic* beauty of the latter, and the grandeur of its pretensions, we are grieved, but, good luck to them, we can spare them. And if Roman Catholics join us or our "Dissenting brethren," because their own Church is behind the age, insists on Aristotelic dogmas, and interferes with liberty of thought, such a conversion is no triumph over popery, but over St. Peter and St. Paul. Our only safety lies in obedience; our only comfort in keeping it in view.

If this be so, we have arrived at the following conclusion: that it is our duty to betake ourselves to Scripture, and to observe how far the private search of a religion is there sanctioned, and under what circumstances. This then is the next point which comes under consideration.

2.

Now the first and most ordinary kind of Private Judgment, if it deserves the name, which is recognized in Scripture, is that in which we engage without conscious or deliberate purpose. While Lydia heard St. Paul preach, her heart was opened. She had it not in mind to exercise any supposed sacred right, she was not setting about the choice of a religion, but she was drawn on to accept the Gospel by a moral persuasion. "To him that hath more shall be given," not in the way of judging or choosing, but by an inward development met by external disclosures. Lydia's instance is the type of a multitude of cases, differing very much from each other, some divinely ordered, others merely human, some which would commonly be called cases of private judgment, and others which certainly would not, but all agreeing in this, that the judgment exercised is not recognized and realized by the party exercising it, as the subject-matter of command, promise, duty, privilege, or any thing else. It is but the spontaneous stirring of the affections within, or the passive acceptance of what is offered from without. St. Paul baptized Lydia's household also; it would seem then that he baptized servants or

slaves, who had very little power of judging between a true religion and a false; shall we say that they, like their mistress, accepted the Gospel on private judgment or not? Did the thousands baptized in national conversions exercise their private judgment or not? Do children when taught their catechism? Most persons will reply in the negative: yet it will be difficult to separate their case in principle from what Lydia's may have been; that is, the case of religious persons who are advancing forward into the truth—how, they know not. Neither the one class nor the other have undertaken to inquire and judge, or have set about being converted, or have got their reasons all before them and together, to discharge at an enemy or passer-by on fit occasions. The difference between these two classes is in the state of their hearts; the one party consist of unformed minds, or senseless and dead, or minds under temporary excitement, who are brought over by external or accidental influences, without any real sympathy for the religion, which is taught them *in order* that they may *learn* sympathy with it, and who, as time goes on, fall away again if they are not happy enough to become imbued with it; and in the other party there is already a

sympathy between the external Word and the heart within. The one are proselytized by force, authority, or their mere feelings, the others through their habitual and abiding frame of mind and cast of opinion. But neither can be said, in the ordinary sense of the word, to inquire, reason, and decide about religion. And yet in a great number of these cases,—certainly where the persons in question are come to years of discretion and show themselves consistent in their religious profession afterward,—they would be commonly set forth by Protestant minds as instances of the due exercise of the right of private judgment.

Such are the greater number perhaps of converts at this day, in whatever direction their conversion lies; and their so-called exercise of private judgment is neither right nor wrong in itself, it is a spontaneous act which they do not think about; if it is any thing, it is but a means of bringing out their moral characteristics one way or the other. Often, as in the case of very illiterate and unreflecting persons, it proves nothing either way; but in those who are not so, it is right or wrong, as their hearts are right or wrong; it is an exercise not of reason but of heart. Take, for instance, the case of a servant

in a family; she is baptized and educated in the Church of England, and is religiously disposed; she goes into Scotland and conforms to the Kirk, to which her master and mistress belong. She is of course responsible for what she does, but no one would say that she had formed any purpose, or taken any deliberate step. In course of time, when perhaps taxed with the change, she would say in her defence that outward forms matter not, and that there are good men in Scotland as well as in England; but this is an after-thought. Again, a careless person, nominally a Churchman, falls among serious-minded Dissenters, and they reclaim him from vice or irreligion; on this he joins their communion, and as time goes on, boasts perhaps of his right of private judgment. At the time itself, however, no process of inquiry took place within him at all; his heart was "opened," whether for good or for bad, whether by good influences or by good and bad mixed. He was not conscious of convincing reasons, but he took what came to hand, he embraced what was offered, he felt and he acted. Again, a man is brought up among Unitarians, or in the frigid and worldly school which got a footing in the Church during last century, and has been

accustomed to view religion as a matter of reason and form, of obligation, to the exclusion of affectionateness and devotion. He falls among persons of what is called an Evangelical cast, and finds his heart interested, and great objects set before it. Such a man falls in with the sentiments he finds, rather than adopts them. He follows the leadings of his heart, perhaps of Divine grace, but certainly not any course of inquiry and proof. There is nothing of argument, discussion, or choice in the process of his conversion. He has no systems to choose between, and no grounds to scrutinize.

Now, in all such cases, the sort of private judgment exercised is right or wrong, not as private judgment, but according to its circumstances. It is either the attraction of a Divine Influence, such as the mind cannot master, or it is a suggestion of reason, which the mind has yet to analyze, before it can bring it to the test of logic. If it is the former, it is above a private judgment, popularly so-called; if the latter, it is not yet so much as one.

A second class of conversions on private judgment consists of those which take place upon the sight or the strong testimony of miracles. Such was the instance of Rahab, of

Naaman, if he may be called a convert, and of Nebuchadnezzar; of the blind man in John ix, of St. Paul, of Cornelius, of Sergius Paulus, and many others. Here again the act of judgment is of a very peculiar character. It is not exactly an unconscious act, but yet it is hardly an act of judgment. Our belief in external sensible facts cannot properly be called an act of private judgment; yet since Protestants, we suppose, would say that the blind man or Sergius Paulus were converted on private judgment, let it even so be called, though it is of a very particular kind. Again, conviction after a miracle also implies the latent belief that such acts are signs of the Divine Presence, a belief which may be as generally recognized and maintained, and is as little a peculiar or private feeling as the impression on the senses of the miracle itself. And this leads to the mention of a further instance of the sort of private judgments to which men are invited in Scripture, viz., the exercise of the moral sense. Our Creator has stamped certain great truths upon our minds, and there they remain in spite of the fall. St. Paul appeals to one of these at Lystra, calling on the worshippers of idols to turn from these vanities unto the Living God; and at Athens, "not to think

that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and man's device," but to worship "God who made the world and all things therein." In the same tone he reminds the Thessalonians of their having "turned to God from idols to serve the Living and True God." In like manner, doubtless, other great principles also of religion and morals are rooted in the minds so deeply, that their denial by any religion would be a justification of our quitting or rejecting it. If a pagan found his ecclesiastical polity essentially founded on lying and cheating, or his ritual essentially impure, or his moral code essentially unjust or cruel, we conceive this would be a sufficient reason for his renouncing it for one which was free from these hateful characteristics. Such again is the kind of private judgment exercised, when maxims of principles, generally admitted by bodies of men, are acted upon by individuals who have been ever taught them, as a matter of course, without questioning them; for instance, if a member of the English Church, who had always been taught that preaching is the great ordinance of the Gospel, to the disparagement of the Sacraments, thereupon placed himself under the ministry of a powerful Wesleyan

preacher; or if, from the common belief that nothing is essential but what is on the surface of Scripture, he forthwith attached himself to the Baptists, Independents, or Unitarians. Such men indeed often take their line in consequence of some inward liking for the religious system they adopt; but we are speaking of their proceeding as far as it professes to be an act of judgment.

A third class of private judgments recorded in Scripture are those which are exercised at one and the same time by a great number; if it be not a contradiction to call such judgments private. Yet here again we suppose staunch Protestants would maintain that the three thousand at Pentecost, and the five thousand after the miracle on the lame man, and the "great company of the priests," which shortly followed, did avail themselves, and do afford specimens, of the sacred right in question; therefore let it be ruled so. Such, then, is the case of national conversions to which we have already alluded. Again, if the Lutheran Church of Germany with its many theologians, or our neighbor the Kirk,—General Assembly, Men of Strathbogie, Dr. Chalmers, and all,—came to a unanimous or quasi-unanimous resolve to sub-

mit to the Archbishop of Canterbury as their patriarch, this doubtless would be an exercise of private judgment perfectly defensible on Scripture precedents.

Now, before proceeding, let us observe, that as yet nothing has been found in Scripture to justify the cases of private judgment which are exemplified in the popular religious biographies of the day. These generally contain instances of conversions made on the judgment, definite, deliberate, independent, isolated, of the parties converted. The converts in these stories had not seen miracles, nor had they developed their own existing principles or beliefs, nor had they changed their religion in company with others, nor had they received new truths, they knew not how. Let us then turn to Scripture a second time, to see whether we can gain thence any clearer sanction of Private Judgment as now exercised among us, than our search into Scripture has hitherto furnished.

3.

There certainly is another method of conversion upon private judgment described in Scripture, which is much more to our purpose, viz., by means of the study of Scripture itself. Thus

our Lord says to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures"; and the treasurer of Candace was reading the book of Isaiah when St. Philip met him; and the men of Berea are said to be "more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." And it is added, "therefore many of them believed." Here at length, it will be said, is a precedent for such acts of private judgment as are most frequently recommended and instanced in religious tales; and indeed these texts commonly are understood to make it certain beyond dispute, that individuals ordinarily may find out the doctrines of the Gospel for themselves from the private study of Scripture. A little consideration, however, will convince us that even these are precedents for something else; that they sanction, not an inquiry about Gospel doctrine, but about the Gospel teacher; not what has God revealed, but whom has He commissioned? And this is a very different thing.

The context of the passage in which our Lord speaks of searching the Scriptures, shows plainly that their office is that of leading, not to a knowledge of the Gospel, but of Himself,

its Author and Teacher. "Whom He hath sent," He says, "Him ye believe not. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which *testify of Me*." He adds, that they "will not come unto Him, that they may have life," and that "He is come in His Father's name, and they receive Him not." And again, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have belived Me, for he *wrote of Me*." It is plain that in this passage our Lord does not send His hearers to the Old Testament to gain thence the knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel by means of their private judgment, but to gain tests or notes by which to find out and receive Him who was the teacher of those doctrines; and, though the treasurer of Candace appears in the narrative to be contemplating our Lord in prophecy, not as the teacher but the object of the Christian faith, yet still in confessing that he could not "understand" what he was reading, "unless some man should guide him," he lays down the principle broadly, which we desire here to maintain, that the private study of Scripture is not intended ordinarily as the means of getting a knowledge of the Gospel. In like manner, St. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, refers to the

book of Joel, by way of proving thence, not the Christian doctrine, but the divine promise that new teachers were to be sent in due season, and the fact that it was fulfilled in himself and his brethren. "This is that," he says, "which was spoken by the prophet Joel, I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and *your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*."

While, then, the conversions recorded in Scripture are brought about in a very marked way through a *teacher*, and *not* by means of private judgment, so again, if an appeal *is* made to private judgment, this is done in order to settle who the teacher is, and what are his notes or tokens, rather than to substantiate this or that religious opinion or practice. And if such instances bear upon our conduct at this day, as it is natural to think they do, then of course the practical question before us is, *who* is the teacher now, from whose mouth are we to seek the law, and *what are his notes?*

Now, in remarkable coincidence with this view, we find in both Testaments that teachers are promised under the dispensation of the Gospel, so that they who, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures daily will be at little loss *whither* their private judgment should

lead them in order to gain the knowledge of the truth. In the book of Isaiah we have the following express promises: "Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the waters of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but *thine eyes shall see thy teachers*, and thine ears *shall hear a voice behind thee*, saying, This is the way," etc. Several tests follow descriptive of the condition of things or the circumstances in which these teachers are to be found. First, the absence of idolatry: "Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornaments of thy molten images of gold"; and next the multitude of fellow-believers: "Then shall He give the *rain of thy seed*, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; in that day shall thy cattle feed *in large pastures*." Elsewhere the appointed teacher is noted as speaking with authority and judicially, as: "Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." And here again the promises or tests of extent and perpetuity appear: "Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles"; and "My kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed."

Elsewhere holiness is mentioned: "It shall be called, The way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it." One more promise shall be cited: "My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed . . . from henceforth and for ever."

In the New Testament we have the same promises stated far more concisely indeed, but, what is much more apposite than a longer description, with the addition of the *name* of our promised teacher: "The *Church* of the living God," says St. Paul, "*the pillar and ground of the truth.*" The simple question then for Private Judgment to exercise itself upon is, what and where is the Church?

Now let it be observed how exactly this view of the province of Private Judgment, where it is allowable, as being the discovery not of doctrine, but of the teacher of doctrine, harmonizes both with the nature of Religion and the state of human society as we find it. Religion is for practice, and that immediate. Now it is much easier to form a correct and rapid judgment of persons than of books or of doctrines. Every one, even a child, has an impression about new

faces; few persons have any real view about new propositions. There is something in the sight of persons or of bodies of men, which speaks to us for approval or disapprobation with a distinctness to which pen and ink are unequal. This is just the kind of evidence which is needed for use, in cases in which private judgment is divinely intended to be the means of our conversion. The multitude have neither the time, the patience, nor the clearness and exactness of thought, for processes of investigation and deduction. Reason is slow and abstract, cold and speculative; but man is a being of feeling and action; he is not resolvable into a *dictum de omni et nullo*, or a series of hypotheticals, or a critical diatribe, or an algebraical equation. And this obvious fact does, as far as it goes, make it probable that, if we are providentially obliged to exercise our private judgment, the point toward which we have to direct it, is the teacher rather than the doctrine.

In corroboration, it may be observed, that Scripture seems always to imply the presence of teachers as the appointed ordinance by which men learn the truth; and is principally engaged in giving cautions against false teachers, and

tests for ascertaining the true. Thus our Lord bids us "beware of false prophets," not of false books; and look to their fruits. And He says elsewhere that "the sheep know His voice," and that "they know not the voice of strangers." And He predicts false Christs, and false prophets, who are to be nearly successful against even the elect. He does not give us tests of false doctrines, but of certain visible peculiarities or notes applicable to persons or parties. "If they shall say, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chamber, believe it not." St. Paul insists on tokens of a similar kind: "Mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them"; "is Christ divided?" "beware of dogs, beware of evil workers"; "be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample." Thus the New Testament equally with the Old, as far as it speaks of private examination into teaching professedly from heaven, makes the teacher the subject of that inquiry, and not the thing taught; it bids us ask for his credentials, and avoid him if he is unholy, or idolatrous, or schismatical, or if he comes in his own name, or if he claims no authority, or is the growth of a particular spot or of particular circumstances.

If there are passages which at first sight seem to interfere with this statement, they admit of an easy explanation. Either they will be found to appeal to those instinctive feelings of our nature already spoken of which supersede argument and proof in the judgments we form of persons or bodies; as in St. Paul's reference to the idolatry of Athenian worship, or to the extreme moral corruption of heathenism generally. Or, again, the criterion of doctrine which they propose to the private judgment of the individual turns upon the question of its novelty or previous reception. When St. Paul would describe a false gospel, he calls it *another* gospel "than that ye have received"; and St. John bids us "try the spirits," gives us as the test of truth and error the "confessing that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," and warns us against receiving into our houses any one who "brings not this doctrine." We conceive then that, on the whole, the notion of gaining religious truth for ourselves by our private examination, whether by reading or thinking, whether by studying Scripture or other books, has no broad sanction in Scripture, is neither impressed upon us by its general tone, nor enjoined in any of its commands. The great question which it

puts before us for the exercise of private judgment is,—Who is God's prophet, and where? Who is to be considered the voice of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church?

4.

Having carried our train of thought as far as this, it is time for us to proceed to the thesis in which it will be found to issue, viz., that, on the principles that have been laid down, Dissenters ought to abandon their own communion, but that members of the English Church ought not to abandon theirs. Such a position has often been treated as a paradox and inconsistency; yet we hope to be able to recommend it favorably to the reader.

Now that seceders, sectarians, independent thinkers, and the like, by whatever name they call themselves, whether "Wesleyans," "Dissenters," "professors of the national religion," "well-wishers of the Church," or even "Churchmen," are in grievous error, in their mode of exercising their private judgment, is plain as soon as stated, viz., because they do not use it in looking out for a teacher at all. They who think they have, in consequence of their inquiries, found the teacher of truth, may be wrong

in the result they have arrived at; but those who despise the notion of a teacher altogether, are already wrong before they begin them. They do not start with their private judgment in that one special direction which Scripture allows or requires. Scripture speaks of a certain pillar or ground of truth, as set up to the world, and describes it by certain characteristics; dissenting teachers and bodies, so far from professing to be themselves this authority, or to contain among them this authority, assert there is no such authority to be found anywhere. When, then, we deny that they are the Church in our meaning of the word, they ought to take no offence at it, for we are not denying them any thing to which they lay claim; we are but denying them what they already put away from themselves as much as we can. They must not act like the dog in the fable (if it be not too light a comparison), who would neither use the manger himself, nor relinquish it to others; let them not grudge to others a manifest Scriptural privilege which they disown themselves. Is an ordinance of Scripture to be fulfilled nowhere, because it is not fulfilled in them? By the Church we mean what Scripture means, "the pillar and ground of the truth"; a power out

of whose mouth the Word and the Spirit are never to fail, and whom whoso refuses to hear becomes thereupon to all his brethren a heathen man and a publican. Let the parties in question accept the Scripture definition, or else not resume the Scripture name; or, rather, let them seek elsewhere what they are conscious is not among themselves. We hear much of Bible Christians, Bible religion, Bible preaching; it would be well if we heard a little of the Bible Church also; we venture to say that Dissenting Churches would vanish thereupon at once, for, since it is their fundamental principle that they are not a pillar or ground of truth, but voluntary societies, without authority and without gifts, the Bible Church they cannot be. If the serious persons who are in dissent would really imitate the simple-minded Ethiopian, or the noble Bereans, let them ask themselves: "Of whom speaketh" the Apostle, or the Prophet, such great things?—Where is the "pillar and ground"?—Who is it that is appointed to lead us to Christ?—Where are those teachers which were never to be removed into a corner any more, but which were ever to be before our eyes and in our ears? Whoever is right, or whoever is wrong, they cannot be right who

profess not to have found, not to look out for, not to believe in, that Ordinance to which Apostles and Prophets give their testimony. So much then for the Protestant side of the thesis.

One half of it then is easily disposed of; but now we come to the other side of it, the Roman, which certainly has its intricacies. It is not difficult to know how we should act toward a religious body which does not even profess to come to us in the name of the Lord, or to be a pillar and ground of the truth; but what shall we say when more than one society, or school, or party, lay claim to be the heaven-sent teacher, and are rivals one to the other, as are the Churches of England and Rome at this day? How shall we discriminate between them? Which are we to follow? Are tests given us for that purpose? Now if tests are given us, we must use them; but if not, and so far as not, we must conclude that Providence foresaw that the difference between them would never be so great as to require of us to leave the one for the other.

However, it is certain that much *is* said in Scripture about rival teachers, and that at least some of these rivals are so opposed to each

other, that tests are given us, in order to our shunning the one party, and accepting the other. In such cases, the one teacher is represented to be the minister of God, and the other the child and organ of evil. The one comes in God's name, the other professes to come simply in his own name. Such a contrast is presented to us in the conflict between Moses and the magicians of Egypt; all is light on the one side, all darkness on the other. Or again, in the trial between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. There is no doubt, in such a case, that it would be our imperative duty at once to leave the teaching of Satan, and betake ourselves to the Law and the Prophets. And it will be observed that, to assist inquirers in doing so, the representatives of Almighty God have been enabled, in their contests with the enemy, to work miracles, as Moses was, for instance, and Elijah, in order to make it clear which way the true teaching lay.

But now will any one say that the contrast between the English and the Roman, or again, the Greek, Churches, is of this nature?—is any of the three a "*monstrum nullâ virtute redemptum*"? Moreover, the magicians and the priests of Baal "came in their own name"; is

that the case with the Church, English, Roman, or Greek? Is it not certain, even at first sight, that each of these branches has many high gifts and much grace in her communion. And, at any rate, as regards our controversy with Rome, if her champions would maintain that the Church of England is the false prophet, and she the true one, then let her work miracles as Moses did in the presence of the magicians, in order to our conviction.

Probably, however, it will be admitted that the contrast between England and Rome is not of that nature; for the English Church confessedly does not come in her own name, nor can she reasonably be compared to the Egyptian magicians or the prophets of Baal; is there any other type in Scripture into which the difference between her and the Church of Rome can be resolved? We shall be referred, perhaps, to the case of the false prophets of Israel and Judah, who professed to come in the name of the Lord, yet did not preach the truth, and had no part or inheritance with God's prophets. This parallel is not happier than the former, for a test was given to distinguish between them, which does not decide between the Church of Rome and ourselves. This test is the divine

accomplishment of the prophet's message, or the divine blessing upon his teaching, or the eventual success of his work, as it may be variously stated; a test under which neither Church, Roman or Anglican, will fail, and neither is eminently the foremost. Each Church has had to endure trial, each has overcome it; each has triumphed over enemies; each has had continued signs of the divine favor upon it. The passages in Scripture to which we refer are such as the following: Moses, for instance, has laid it down in the Book of Deuteronomy, that, "when a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath *not* spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously." To the same effect, in the Book of Ezekiel, the denunciation against the false prophet is: "Lo! *when the wall is fallen*, shall it not be said unto you, *where* is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?" And Gamaliel's advice to "refrain from these men, and let them alone, for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought," may be taken as an illustration of the same rule of judgment. Hence Roman Catholics themselves are accustomed to consider, that eventual failure is the

sure destiny of heresy and schism; what then will they say to us? The English Church has remained in its present state three hundred years, and at the end of the time is stronger than at the beginning. This does not look like an heretical or schismatical Church. However, when she does fall to pieces, then, it may be admitted, her children *will* have a reason for deserting her; till then, she has no symptom of being akin to the false prophets who professed the Lord's name, and deceived the simple and unlearned; she has no symptom of being a traitor to the *faith.*

However, there is a third type of rival teaching mentioned in Scripture, under which the dissension between Rome and England may be considered to fall, and which it may be well to notice. Let it be observed, then, that even in the Apostles' age very grave outward differences seem to have existed between Christian teachers—that is, the organs of the one Church; and yet those differences were not, in consequence, any call upon inquirers and beholders to quit one teacher and betake themselves to another. The state of the Corinthian Christians will exemplify what we mean: Paul, Cephas, and Apollos were all friends together,

yet parties were formed round each separately, which disagreed with each other, and made the Apostles themselves seem in disagreement. Is not this, at least in great measure, the state of the Churches of England and Rome? Are they not one in faith, so far forth as they are viewed in their essential apostolical character? are they not in discord, so far as their respective children and disciples have overlaid them with errors of their own individual minds? It was a great fault, doubtless, that the followers of St. Paul should have divided from the followers of St. Peter, but would it have mended matters, had any individuals among them gone over to St. Peter? Was that the fitting remedy for the evil? Was not the remedy that of their putting aside partisanship altogether, and regarding St. Paul "not after the flesh," but simply as "the minister by whom they believed," the visible representative of the undivided Christ, the one Catholic Church? And, in like manner, surely if party feelings and interests have separated us from the members of the Roman communion, this does not prove that our Church itself is divided from theirs, any more than that St. Paul was divided from St. Peter, nor is it our duty to leave our place and join them;—nothing

would be gained by so unnecessary a step;—but our duty is, remaining where we are, to recognize in our own Church, not an establishment, not a party, not a mere Protestant denomination, but the Holy Church Catholic which the traditions of men have partially obscured,—to rid it of these traditions, to try to soften bitterness and animosity of feeling, and to repress party spirit and promote peace as much as in us lies. Moreover, let it be observed, that St. Paul was evidently superior in gifts to Apollos, yet this did not justify Christians attaching themselves to the former rather than the latter; for, as the Apostle says, they both were but ministers of one and the same Lord, and nothing more. Comparison, then, is not allowed us between teacher and teacher, where each has on the whole the notes of a divine mission; so that even could the Church of Rome be proved superior to our own (which we put merely as an hypothesis, and for argument's sake), this would as little warrant our attaching ourselves to it instead of our own Church, as there was warrant for one of the converts of Apollos to call himself by the name of Paul. Further, let it be observed, that the apostle reproves those who attached themselves to St.

Peter equally with the Paulines or with the disciples of Apollos; is it possible he could have done so, were St. Peter the head and essence of the Church in a sense in which St. Paul was not? And, again, there was an occasion when not only their followers were at variance, but the Apostles themselves; we refer to the dissimulation of St. Peter at Antioch, and the resistance of St. Paul to it: was this a reason why St. Peter's disciples should go over to St. Paul, or rather why they should correct their dissimulation?

We are surely bound to prosecute this search after the promised Teacher of truth entirely as a practical matter, with reference to our duty and nothing else. The simple question which we have to ask ourselves is, Has the English Church *sufficiently* upon her the signs of an Apostle? is she the divinely-appointed teacher to *us?* If so, we need not go further; we have no reason to break through the divine rule of "being content with such things as we have"; we have no warrant to compare our own prophet with the prophet given to others. Nor can we: tests are not given us for the purpose. We may believe that our own Church has certain imperfections; the Church of Rome certain corrup-

tions: such a belief has no tendency to lead us to any determinate judgment as to which of the two on the whole is the better, or to induce or warrant us to leave the one communion for the other.

5

One point remains, however, which is so often felt as a difficulty by members of our Church that we are tempted to say a few words upon it in conclusion, and to try to show what is the true practical mode of meeting it. And this perhaps will give us an opportunity of expressing our general meaning in a more definite and intelligible form.

It cannot be denied, then, that a very plausible ground of attack may be taken up against the Church of England, from the circumstance that she is separated from the rest of Christendom; and just such a ground as it would be allowable for private judgment to rest and act upon, supposing its office to be what we have described it to be. "As to the particular doctrines of Anglicanism, (it may be urged,) Scripture may, if so be, supply private judgment with little grounds for quarrelling with them; but what can be said to explain away the note of forfeiture, which attaches to us in

consequence of our isolated state? We are, in fact, (it may be objected,) cut off from the whole of the Christian world; nay, far from denying that excommunication, in a certain sense we glory in it, and that under a notion, that we are so very pure that it must soil our fingers to touch any other Church whatever upon the earth, in north, east, or south. How is this reconcilable with St. Paul's clear announcement that there is but one body as well as one spirit? or with our Lord's, that 'by this shall *all men know*,' as by a note obvious to the intelligence even of the illiterate and unreasoning, 'that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another'? or again, with His prayer that His disciples might all be one, 'that the world may know that *Thou hast sent Me*, and hast *loved them* as Thou hast loved Me'? Visible unity, then, would seem to be both the main evidence for Christianity, and the sign of our own participation in its benefits; whereas we English despise the Greeks and hate the Romans, turn our backs on the Scotch Episcopalians, and do but smile distantly upon our American cousins. We throw ourselves into the arms of the State, and in that close embrace forget that the Church was meant to be

Catholic; or we call ourselves *the* Catholics, and the mere Church of England *our* Catholic Church; as if, forsooth, by thus confining it all to ourselves, we did not *ipso facto* all claim to be considered Catholics at all."

What increases the force of this argument is, that St. Augustine seems, at least at first sight, virtually to urge it against us in his controversy with the Donatists, whom he represents as condemned, simply because separate from the "orbis terrarum," and styles the point in question "quæstio facillima," and calls on individual Donatists to decide it by their private judgment.[1]

Now this is an objection which we must honestly say is deeply felt by many people, and not inconsiderable ones; and the more it is openly avowed to be a difficulty the better; for then there is the chance of its being acknowledged, and in the course of time obviated, as far as

[1] Ego cùm audio quenquam bono ingenio præditum, doctrinisque liberalibus eruditum, quamquam non ibi salus animæ constituta sit, tamen in *quæstione facillimâ* sentire aliud quàm veritas postulat, quo magis miror, eò magis exardesco nosse hominem et cum eo colloqui; vel si id non possim, saltem litteris quæ longissimè volant [to the nineteenth century?] attingere mentem ejus atque ab eo vicissim attingi desidero. Sicut te esse audio talem virum, et ab Ecclesiâ Catholicâ, quæ sicut Sancto Spiritu pronunciata est, toto orbe diffunditur, discerptum doleo atque seclusum.—Ep. 87, *vid.* ep. 61.

may be, by those who have the power. Flagrant evils cure themselves by being flagrant; and we are sanguine that the time is come when so great an evil as this is, cannot stand its ground against the good feeling and common-sense of religious persons. It is the very strength of Romanism against us; and, unless the proper persons take it into their very serious consideration, they may look for certain to undergo the loss, as time goes on, of some whom they would least like to be lost to our Church. If private judgment can be exercised on any point, it is on a matter of the senses; now our eyes and our ears are filled with the abuse poured out by members of our Church on her sister Churches in foreign lands. It is not that their corrupt practices are gravely and tenderly pointed out, as may be done by men who feel themselves also to be sinful and ignorant, and know that they have their own great imperfections, which their brethren abroad have not,—but we are apt not to acknowledge them as brethren at all; we treat them in an arrogant John Bull way, as mere Frenchmen, or Spaniards, or Austrians, not as Christians. We act as if we could do without brethren; as if our having brethren all over the world were not

the very tenure on which we are Christians at all; as if we did not cease to be Christians, if at any time we ceased to have brethren. Or again, when our thoughts turn to the East, instead of recollecting that there are sister Churches there, we leave it to the Russians to take care of the Greeks, and to the French to take care of the Romans and we content ourselves with erecting a Protestant Church at Jerusalem, or with helping the Jews to rebuild their temple there, or with becoming the august protectors of Nestorians, Monophysites, and all the heretics we can hear of, or with forming a league with the Mussulman against Greeks and Romans together. Can any one doubt that the British power is not considered a Church power by any country whatever into which it comes? and if so, is it possible that the English Church, which is so closely connected with that power, can be said in any true sense to exert a Catholic influence, or to deserve the Catholic name? How can any Church be called Catholic, which does not act beyond its own territory? and when did the rulers of the English Church ever move one step beyond the precincts, or without the leave, of the imperial power?

"pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli."

There is indeed no denying them; and if certain persons are annoyed at the confession, as if we were thereby putting weapons into our enemies' hands, let them be annoyed more by the fact, and let them alter the fact, and, they may take our word for it, the confession will cease of itself. The world does not feel the fact the less for its not being confessed; it *is* felt deeply by many, and is doing incalculable mischief to our cause, and is likely to hurt it more and more. In a word, this isolation is doing as much as any one thing can do to unchurch us, and it and our awakened claims to be Catholic and Apostolic cannot long stand together. This, then, is the main difficulty which serious people feel in accepting the English Church as the promised prophet of truth, and we are far indeed from undervaluing it, as the above remarks show.

But now taking the objection in a simply practical view, which is the only view in which it ought to concern or perplex any one, we consider that it can have legitimately no effect whatever in leading us from England to Rome. We do not say no legitimate tendency in itself to move us, but no legitimate influence with serious men, who wish to know how their duty

lies. For this reason—because if the note of schism on the one hand lies against England, an antagonist disgrace lies upon Rome, the note of idolatry. Let us not be mistaken here: we are neither accusing Rome of being idolatrous nor ourselves of being schismatical,—we think neither charge tenable; but still the Roman Church practises what looks so very like idolatry, and the English glories in what looks so very like schism, that, without deciding what is the duty of a Roman Catholic toward the Church of England in her present state, we do seriously think that members of the English Church have a providential direction given them, how to comport themselves toward the Church of Rome, while she is what she is. We are discussing the subject, not of decisive proofs, but of probable indications and of presumptive notes of the divine will. Few men have time to scrutinize accurately; all men may have general impressions, and the general impressions of conscientious men are true ones. Providence has graciously met their need, and provided for them those very means of knowledge which they can use and turn to account. He has cast around the institutions and powers existing in the world marks of truth or false-

hood, or, more properly, elements of attraction and repulsion, and notices for pursuit and avoidance, sufficient to determine the course of those who in the conduct of life desire to approve themselves to Him. Now, whether or no what we see in the Church of Rome be sufficient to warrant a religious person to leave her, (a question, we repeat, about which we have no need here to concern ourselves,) we certainly think it sufficient to deter him from joining her; and, whatever be the perplexity and distress of his position in a communion so isolated as the English, we do not think he would mend the matter by placing himself in a communion so superstitious as the Roman; especially considering, agreeably to a remark we have already made, that even if he be schismatical at present, he is so by the act of Providence, whereas he would be entering into superstition by his own. Thus an Anglo-Catholic is kept at a distance from Rome, if not by our own excellences, at least by her errors.

That this is the state of the Church of Rome, is, alas! not fairly disputable. Dr. Wiseman has lately attempted to dispute it; but if we may judge from the present state of the controversy, facts are too clear for him. It has lately been

broadly put forward, as all know, that, whatever may be said in defence of the *authoritative documents* of the faith of Rome, this imputation lies against her *authorities*, that they have countenanced and established doctrines and practices from which a Christian mind, not educated in them, shrinks; and that in the number of these a worship of the creature which to most men will seem to be a quasi-idolatry is not the least prominent.[1] Dr. Wiseman, for whom we entertain most respectful feelings personally, and to whom we impute nothing but what is straightforward and candid, has written two pamphlets on the subject, toward which we should be very sorry to deal unfairly; but he certainly seems to us in the former of them to deny the fact of these alleged additions in the formal profession of his Church, and then, in the second, to turn right round and maintain them. What account is to be given of self-contradiction such as this, but the fact, that he would deny the additions, if he could, and defends them, because he can't? And that dilemma is no common one; for, as if to show that what he holds in excess of our creed is in excess also of

[1] [This is an exaggeration; I have reconsidered the whole subject in my essay on "Development of Doctrine," in 1845; and in my letter to Dr. Pusey in 1866.]

primitive usage, he has in his defence been forced upon citations from the writings of the Fathers, the chief of which, as Mr. Palmer has shown, are spurious; thus setting before us vividly what he looks for in Antiquity, but what he cannot find there. However, it is not our intention to enter into a controversy which is in Mr. Palmer's hands; nor need we do more than refer the reader to the various melancholy evidences, which that learned, though over-severe writer, and Dr. Pusey, and Mr. Ward adduce, in proof of the existence of this note of dishonor in a sister or mother, toward whom we feel so tenderly and reverently, and whom nothing but some such urgent reason in conscience could make us withstand so resolutely.

So much has been said on this point lately, as to increase our unwillingness to insist upon a subject in itself very ungrateful; but a reference to it is unavoidable, if we would adequately show what is the legitimate use and duty of private judgment, in dealing with those notes of truth and error, by which Providence recommends to us or disowns the prophets that come in His name.

What imparts an especial keenness to the grief which the teaching in question causes in

minds kindly disposed toward the Church of Rome, is, that not only are we expressly told in Scripture that the Almighty will not give His glory to another, but it is predicted as His especial grace upon the Christian Church, "the idols He shall utterly abolish"; so that, if Anglicans are almost unchurched by the Protestantism which has mixed itself up with their ecclesiastical proceedings, Romanists, also, are almost unchurched by their superstitions. Again and again in the Prophets is this promise given: "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you"; "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols"; "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?" "I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land." And the warning in the New is as strong as the promise in the Old: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols"; "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels"; and the angel's answer, to whom St. John fell down in worship, was "See thou do it not, *for* I am thy fellow-servant: worship God."[1]

[1] This passage proves, on the one hand, that such worship as St. John offered is wrong; on the other, that it does not unchurch, unless we can fancy St. John guilty of mortal sin.

It is then a note of the Christian Church, as decisive as any, that she is not idolatrous; and any semblance of idolatrous worship in the Church of Rome as plainly dissuades a man of Catholic feelings from her communion, as the taint of a Protestant or schismatical spirit in our communion may tempt him to depart from us. This is the Via Media which we would maintain; and thus without judging Rome on the one hand, or acquiescing in our own state on the other, we may use what we see, as a providential intimation to *us*, not to quit what is bad for what may be worse, but to learn resignation to what we inherit, nor seek to escape into a happier state by suicide.

6.

And in such a state of things, certain though it be that St. Austin invites individual Donatists to the Church, on the simple ground that the larger body must be the true one, he is not, he cannot be, a guide of *our* conduct here. The Fathers are our teachers, but not our confessors or casuists; they are the prophets of great truths, not the spiritual directors of individuals. How can they possibly be such, considering the subject-matter of conduct? Who

shall say that a point of practice which is right in one man, is right even in his next-door neighbor? Do not the Fathers differ with each other in matters of teaching and action, yet what fair persons ever imputed inconsistency to them in consequence? St. Augustine bids us stay in persecution, yet St. Dionysius takes to flight; St. Cyprian at one time flees, at another time stays. One bishop adorns churches with paintings, another tears down a pictured veil; one demolishes the heathen temples, another consecrates them to the true God. St. Augustine at one time speaks against the use of force in proselytizing, at another time he speaks for it. The Church at one time comes into General Council at the summons of the Emperor; at another time she takes the initiative. St. Cyprian re-baptizes heretics; St. Stephen accepts their baptism. The early ages administer, the later deny, the Holy Eucharist to children.[1] Who shall say that in such practical matters, and especially in points of casuistry, points of the when, and the where, and the by whom,

[1] [All these are merely points of discipline or conduct; but whether there is a visible Church, and whether it is visibly one, is a question which as it is answered affirmatively or negatively changes the essential idea and the entire structure of Christianity.]

and the how, words written in the fourth century are to be the rule of the nineteenth?

We have not St. Austin to consult; we cannot go to him with his works in our hand, and ask him whether they are to be taken to the letter under our altered circumstances. We cannot explain to him that, as far as the appearance of things goes, there are, besides our own, at least two Churches, one Greek, the other Roman; and that they are both marked by a certain peculiarity which does not appear in his own times, or in his own writings, and which much resembles what Scripture condemns as idolatry. Nor can we remind him, that the Donatists had a note of disqualification upon them, which of itself would be sufficient to negative their claims to Catholicity, in that they refused the name of Catholic to the rest of Christendom; and, moreover, in their bitter hatred and fanatical cruelty toward the rival communion in Africa. Moreover, St. Austin himself waives the question of the innocence or guilt of Cæcilian, on the ground that the *orbis terrarum* could not be expected to have accurate knowledge of the facts of the case;[1] and, if contemporary judgments might be deceived in regard to the

[1] Epp. 93, 144.

merits of the African Succession, yet, without blame, much more may it be maintained, without any want of reverence to so great a saint, that private letters which he wrote fourteen hundred years ago, do not take into consideration the present circumstances of Anglo-Catholics. Are we sure, that had he known them, they would not have led to an additional chapter in his Retractions? And again, if ignorance would have been an excuse, in his judgment, for the Catholic world's passing over the crime of the Traditors, had Cæcilian and his party been such, much more, in so nice a question as the Roman claim to the *orbis terrarum* at this day, in opposition to England and Greece, may we fairly consider that he who condemned the Donatists only in the case of "quæstio facillima," would excuse us, even if mistaken, from the notorious difficulties which lie in the way of a true judgment. Nor, moreover, would he, who so constantly sends us to Scripture for the notes of the Church Catholic, condemn us for shunning communions, which had been so little sensitive of the charge made against them of idolatry. But even let us suppose him, after full cognizance of our case, to give judgment against us; even then we shall have the verdict

of St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, and others virtually in our favor, supporters and canonizers as they were of Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, who in St. Augustine's own day lived and died out of the communion of Rome and Alexandria.[1]

We do not think, then, that St. Austin's teaching can be taken as a direction to us to quit our Church on account of its incidental Protestantism, unsatisfactory as it is to have such a note lying against us. And it is pleasant to believe, that there are symptoms at this time of our improvement; and we only wish we could see as much hope of a return to a healthier state in Rome, as is at present visible in our own communion. There is among us a growing feeling, that to be a mere Establishment is unworthy of the Catholic Church; and that to be shut out from the rest of Christendom is not a subject of boasting. We seem to have embraced the idea of the desirableness of being on a good understanding with the Greek and Eastern Churches; and we are aiming at sending out bishops to distant places, where they must come in contact with foreign communions and though the extreme vagueness,

[1] As has been said above, this statement is too absolute; at least, Athanasius was reconciled to Meletius.]

indecision, and confusion, in which our theological and ecclesiastical notions at present lie, will be almost sure to involve us in certain mistakes and extravagances, yet it would be unthankful to "despise the day of small things," and not to recognize in these movements a hopeful stirring of hearts, and a religious yearning after something better than we have. But not to dwell unduly on these public manifestations of a Catholic tendency, we should all recollect that a restoration of intercommunion with other Churches is, in a certain sense, in the power of individuals. Every one who desires unity, who prays for it, who endeavors to further it, who witnesses for it, who behaves Christianly toward the members of Churches alienated from us, who is at amity with them, (saving his duty to his own communion and to the truth itself,) who tries to edify them, while he edifies himself and his own people, may surely be considered, as far as he himself is concerned, as breaking down the middle wall of the division, and renewing the ancient bonds of unity and concord by the power of charity. Charity can do all things for us; charity is at once a spirit of zeal and peace; by charity we shall faithfully protest against what our private

judgment warrants us in condemning in others; and by charity we have it in our own hands, let all men oppose us, to restore in our own circle the intercommunion of the Churches.

There is only one quarter from which a cloud can come over us, and darken and bewilder our course. If, *nefas dictu*, our Church is by any formal acts rendered schismatical, while Greek and Roman idolatry remains not of the Church, but in it merely, denounced by Councils, though admitted by authorities of the day,—if our own communion were to own itself Protestant, while foreign communions disclaimed the superstition of which they are too tolerant,—if the profession of Ancient Truth were to be persecuted in our Church, and its teachings forbidden,—then doubtless, for a season, Catholic minds among us would be unable to see their way.

LESLIE STEPHEN.

BORN 1828.

AN APOLOGY FOR PLAINSPEAKING.

By LESLIE STEPHEN.

ALL who would govern their intellectual course by no other aim than the discovery of truth, and who would use their faculty of speech for no other purpose than open communications of their real opinions to others, are met by protests from various quarters. Such protests, so far as they imply cowardice or dishonesty, must of course be disregarded, but it would be most erroneous to confound all protests in the same summary condemnation. Reverent and kindly minds shrink from giving an unnecessary shock to the faith which comforts many sorely tried souls; and even the most genuine lovers of truth may doubt whether the time has come at which the decayed scaffolding can be swept away without injuring the foundations of the edifice. Some reserve, they think, is necessary, though reserve, as they must admit, passes but too easily into insincerity.

And thus, it is often said by one class of thinkers, Why attack a system of beliefs which is crumbling away quite fast enough without your help? Why, says another class, try to shake beliefs which, whether true or false, are infinitely consoling to the weaker brethren? I will endeavor to conclude these essays, in which I have possibly made myself liable to some such remonstrances, by explaining why I should think it wrong to be bound by them; I will, however, begin by admitting frankly that I recognize their force so far as this; namely, that I have no desire to attack wantonly any sincere beliefs in minds unprepared for the reception of more complete truths. This book, perhaps, would be unjustifiable if it were likely to become a text-book for school-girls in remote country parsonages. But it is not very probable that it will penetrate to such quarters; nor do I flatter myself that I have brought forward a single argument which is not already familiar to educated men. Whatever force there may be in its pages is only the force of an appeal to people who already agree in my conclusions to state their agreement in plain terms; and, having said this much, I will answer the questions suggested as distinctly as I am able.

To the first question, why trouble the last moments of a dying creed, my reply would be in brief that I do not desire to quench the lingering vitality of the dying so much as to lay the phantoms of the dead. I believe that one of the greatest dangers of the present day is the general atmosphere of insincerity in such matters, which is fast producing a scepticism not as to any or all theologies, but as to the very existence of intellectual good faith. Destroy credit, and you ruin commerce; destroy all faith in religious honesty and you ruin something of infinitely more importance than commerce; ideas should surely be preserved as carefully as cotton from the poisonous influence of a varnish intended to fit them for public consumption. "The time is come," says Mr. Mill in his autobiography, "in which it is the duty of all qualified persons to speak their minds about popular religious beliefs." The reason which he assigns is that they would thus destroy the "vulgar prejudice" that unbelief is connected with bad qualities of head and heart. It is, I venture to remark, still more important to destroy the belief of sceptics themselves that in these matters a system of pious frauds is creditable or safe. Effeminating and corrupt-

ing as all equivocation comes to be in the long run, there are other evils behind. Who can see without impatience the fearful waste of good purpose and noble aspiration caused by our reticence at a time when it is of primary importance to turn to account all the forces which make for the elevation of mankind? How much intellect and zeal runs to waste in the spasmodic effort of good men to cling to the last fragments of decaying systems, to galvanize dead formulæ into some dim semblance of life! Society will not improve as it might when those who should be leaders of progress are staggering backward and forward with their eyes passionately reverted to the past. Nay, we shall never be duly sensitive to the miseries and cruelties which make the world a place of torture for so many, so long as men are encouraged in the name of religion to look for a remedy, not in fighting against surrounding evils, but in cultivating aimless contemplations of an imaginary ideal. Much of our popular religion seems to be expressly directed to deaden our sympathies with our fellow-men by encouraging an indolent optimism; our thoughts of the other world are used in many forms as an opiate to drug our minds with indifference to the evils of this; and

the last word of half our preachers is, dream rather than work.

To the other question, Why deprive men of their religious consolations? I must make a rather longer reply. In the first place, I must observe that the burden of proof does not rest with me. If any one should tell me explicitly, a certain dogma is false, but it is better not to destroy it, I would not reply summarily that he is preaching grossly immoral doctrine; but I would only refrain from the reply because I should think that he does not quite mean what he says. His real intention, I should suppose, would be to say that every dogma includes some truth, or is inseparably associated with true statements, and that I ought to be careful not to destroy the wheat with the tares. The presumption remains, at any rate, that a false doctrine is so far mischievous; and its would-be protector is bound to show that it is impossible to assail it without striking through its sides at something beyond. If Christ is not God, the man who denies him to be God is certainly *primâ facie* right, though it may perhaps be possible to show that such a denial cannot be made in practice without attacking a belief in morality. We may, or it is possible to

assert that we may, be under this miserable necessity, that we cannot speak undiluted truth; truth and falsehood are, it is perhaps maintainable, so intricately blended in the world that discrimination is impossible. Still the man who argues thus is bound to assign some grounds for his melancholy scepticism; and to show further that the destruction of the figment is too dearly bought by the assertion of the truth. Therefore, I might be content to say that, in such cases, the innocence of the plain speaker ought to be assumed until his guilt is demonstrated. If we had always waited to clear away shams till we were certain that our action would produce absolutely unmixed benefits, we should still be worshipping Mumbo-Jumbo.

But, whilst claiming the advantage of this presumption, I am ready to meet the objector on his own ground, and to indicate, simply and inefficiently enough, the general nature of the reasons which convince me that the objection could not be sustained. To what degree, in fact, are these sham beliefs, which undoubtedly prevail so widely, a real comfort to any intelligent person? Many believers have described the terrible agony with which they had at one

period of their lives listened to the first whisperings of scepticism. The horror with which they speak of the gulf after managing to struggle back to the right side is supposed to illustrate the cruelty of encouraging others to take the plunge. That such sufferings are at times very real and very acute, is undeniable; and yet I imagine that few who have undergone them would willingly have missed the experience. I venture even to think that the recollection is one of unmixed pain only in those cases in which the sufferer has a half-consciousness that he has not escaped by legitimate means. If in his despair he has clutched at a lie in order to extricate himself as quickly as possible and at any price, it is no wonder that he looks back with a shudder. When the disease has been driven inward by throwing in abundant doses of Paley, Butler, with perhaps an oblique reference to preferment and respectability, it continues to give many severe twinges, and perhaps it may permanently injure the constitution. But, if it has been allowed to run its natural course, and the sufferer has resolutely rejected every remedy except fair and honest argument, I think that the recovery is generally cheering. A man looks back with something of honest pride

at the obstacles through which he has forced his way to a purer and healthier atmosphere. But, whatever the nature of such crises generally, there is an obvious reason why, at the present day, the process is seldom really painful. The change which takes place is not, in fact, an abandonment of beliefs seriously held and firmly implanted in the mind, but a gradual recognition of the truth that you never really held them. The old husk drops off because it has long been withered, and you discover that beneath is a sound and vigorous growth of genuine conviction. Theologians have been assuring you that the world would be intolerably hideous if you did not look through their spectacles. With infinite pains you have turned away your eyes from the external light. It is with relief, not regret, that you discover that the sun shines, and that the world is beautiful without the help of these optical devices which you had been taught to regard as essential.

This, of course, is vehemently denied by all orthodox persons; and the hesitation with which the heterodox impugn their assumption seems to testify to its correctness. "After all," the believer may say, with much appearance of truth, "you don't really believe that I can walk

by myself, if you are so tender of removing my crutches." The taunt is fair enough, and should be fairly met. Cynicism and infidelity are supposed to be inseparably connected; it is assumed that nobody can attack the orthodox creed unless he is incapable of sympathizing with the noblest emotions of our nature. The adversary on purely intellectual grounds would be awed into silence by its moral beauty, unless he were deficient in reverence, purity, and love. It must therefore be said, distinctly, although it cannot be argued at length, that this ground also appears to me to be utterly untenable. I deny that it is impossible to speak the truth without implying a falsehood; and I deny equally that it is impossible to speak the truth without drying up the sources of our holiest feelings. Those who maintain the affirmative of those propositions appear to me to be the worst of sceptics, and they would certainly reduce us to the most lamentable of dilemmas. If we cannot develop our intellects but at the price of our moral nature, the case is truly hard. Some such conclusion is hinted by Roman Catholics, but I do not understand how any one raised under Protestant teaching should regard it as any thing but cowardly and false. Let me en-

deavor in the briefest possible compass to say why, as a matter of fact, the dilemma seems to me to be illusory. What is it that Christian theology can now do for us; and in what way does it differ from the teaching of free thought?

The world, so far as our vision extends, is full of evil. Life is a sore burden to many, and a scene of unmixed happiness to none. It is useless to inquire whether on the whole the good or the evil is the more abundant, or to decide whether to make such an inquiry be any thing else than to ask whether the world has been, on the whole, arranged to suit our tastes. The problem thus presented is utterly inscrutable on every hypothesis. Theology is as impotent in presence of it as science. Science, indeed, withdraws at once from such questions; whilst theology asks us to believe that this "sorry scheme of things" is the work of omnipotence guided by infinite benevolence. This certainly makes the matter no clearer, if it does not raise additional difficulties; and, accordingly, we are told that the existence of evil is a mystery. In any case, we are brought to a stand: and the only moral which either science or theology can give is that we should make the best of our position.

Theology, however, though it cannot explain, or can only give verbal explanations, can offer a consolation. This world, we are told, is not all; there is a beyond and a hereafter; we may hope for an eternal life under conditions utterly inconceivable, though popular theology has made a good many attempts to conceive them. If it were further asserted that this existence would be one of unmixed happiness, there would be at least a show of compensation. But, of course, that is what no theologian can venture to say. It is needless to call the Puritan divine, with his babes of a span long now lying in hell, or that Romanist priest who revels in describing the most fiendish torture inflicted upon children by the merciful Creator who made them and exposed them to evil, or any other of the wild and hideous phantasms that have been evoked by the imagination of mankind running riot in the world of arbitrary figments. Nor need we dwell upon the fact, that where theology is really vigorous it produces such nightmares by an inevitable law; inasmuch as the next world can be nothing but the intensified reflection of this. It is enough to say that, if the revelation of a future state be really the great claim of Christianity upon our

attentions, the use which it has made of that state has been one main cause of its decay. "St. Lewis the king, having sent Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, on an embassy, the bishop met a woman on the way, grave, sad, fantastic, and melancholic; with fire in one hand and water in the other. He asked what those symbols meant. She answered, 'My purpose is with fire to burn Paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God.'" "The woman," adds Jeremy Taylor, "began at the wrong end." Is that so clear? The attempts of priests to make use of the keys of heaven and hell brought about the moral revolt of the Reformation; and, at the present day, the disgust excited by the doctrine of everlasting damnation is amongst the strongest motives to popular infidelity; all able apologists feel the strain. Some reasoners quibble about everlasting and eternal; and the great Catholic logician "submits the whole subject to the theological school," a process which I do not quite understand, though I assume it to be consolatory. The doctrine, in short, can hardly be made tangible without shocking men's con-

sciences and understandings. It ought, it may be, to be attractive, but when firmly grasped, it becomes incredible and revolting.

The difficulty is evaded in two ways. Some amiable and heterodox sects retain heaven and abolish hell. A kingdom in the clouds may, of course, be portioned off according to pleasure. The doctrine, however, is interesting in an intellectual point of view only as illustrating in the naïvest fashion the common fallacy of confounding our wishes with our beliefs. The argument that because evil and good are mixed wherever we can observe, therefore there is elsewhere unmixed good, does not obey any recognized canons of induction. It would certainly be pleasant to believe that everybody was going to be happy forever, but whether such a belief would be favorable to that stern sense of evil which should fit us to fight the hard battle of this life is a question too easily answered. Thinkers of a high order do not have recourse to these simple devices. They retain the doctrine as a protest against materialism, but purposely retain it in the vaguest possible shape. They say that this life is not all; if it were all, they argue, we should be rightly ruled by our stomachs; but they scrupulously

decline to give form and substance to their anticipations. We must, they think, have avowedly a heavenly background to the world, but our gaze should be restricted habitually within the visible horizon. The future life is to tinge the general atmosphere, but not to be offered as a definite goal of action or a distinct object of contemplation.

The persons against whom, so far as I know, the charge of materialism can be brought with the greatest plausibility at the present day are those who still force themselves to bow before the most grossly material symbols, and give a physical interpretation to the articles of her creed. A man who proposes to look for God in this miserable world and finds Him visiting the diseased imagination of a sickly nun, may perhaps be in some sense called a materialist, and there is more materialism of this variety in popular sentimentalisms about the "blood of Jesus" than in all the writings of the profane men of science. But in a philosophical sense the charge rests on a pure misunderstanding.

The man of science or, in other words, the man who most rigidly confines his imagination within the bounds of the knowable, is every

whit as ready to protest against "materialism" as his antagonist. Those who distinguish man into two parts, and give the higher qualities to the soul and the sensual to the body, assume that all who reject their distinction abolish the soul, and with it abolish all that is not sensual. Yet every genuine scientific thinker believes in the existence of love and reverence as he believes in any other facts, and is likely to set just as high a value upon them as his opponent. He believes equally with his opponent, that to cultivate the higher emotions, man must habitually attach himself to objects outside the narrow sphere of his own personal experience. The difference is that whereas one set of thinkers would tell us to fix our affections on a state entirely disparate from that in which we are actually placed, the other would concentrate them upon objects which form part of the series of events amongst which we are moving. Which is the more likely to stimulate our best feelings? We must reply by asking whether the vastness or the distinctness of a prospect has the greater effect upon the imagination. Does a man take the greater interest in a future which he can definitely interpret to himself, or upon one

which is admittedly so inconceivable that it is wrong to dwell upon it, but which allows of indefinite expansion? Putting aside our own personal interest, do we care more for the fate of our grandchildren whom we shall never see, or for the condition of spiritual beings the conditions of whose existence are utterly unintelligible to us? If sacrifice of our lower pleasures be demanded, should we be more willing to make them in order that a coming generation may be emancipated from war and pauperism, or in order that some indefinite and indefinable change may be worked in a world utterly inscrutable to our imaginations? The man who has learned to transfer his aspirations from the next world to this, to look forward to the diminution of disease and vice here, rather than to the annihilation of all physical conditions, has, it is hardly rash to assert, gained more in the distinctness of his aims than he has lost (if, indeed, he has lost any thing) in their elevation.

Were it necessary to hunt out every possible combination of opinion, I should have to inquire whether the doctrine of another world might not be understood in such a sense as to involve no distortion of our views. The future

world may be so arranged that the effect of the two sets of motives upon our minds may be always coincident. Our interest in our descendants might be strengthened without being distracted by a belief in our own future existence. Of such a theory I have now only space to say that it is not that which really occurs in practice: and that the instincts which make us cling to a vivid belief in the future always spring from a vehement revolt against the present. Meanwhile, however, the answers generally given to sceptics are apparently contradictory. To limit our hopes to this world, it is sometimes said, is to encourage mere grovelling materialism; in the same breath it is added that to ask for an interest in the fate of our fellow-creatures here, instead of ourselves hereafter, is to make excessive demands upon human selfishness. The doctrine it seems is at once too elevated and too grovelling.

The theory on which the latter charge rests seems to be that you can take an interest in yourself at any distance, but not in others if they are outside the circle of your own personality. This doctrine, when boldly expressed, seems to rest upon the very apotheosis of selfishness. Theologians have sometimes said, in

perfect consistency, that it would be better for the whole race of man to perish in torture than that a single sin should be committed. One would rather have thought that a man had better be damned a thousand times over than allow of such a catastrophe; but, however this may be, the doctrine now suggested appears to be equally revolting, unless diluted so far as to be meaningless. It amounts to asserting that our love of our own infinitesimal individuality is so powerful that any matter in which we are personally concerned has a weight altogether incommensurable with that of any matter in which we have no concern. People who hold such a doctrine would be bound in consistency to say that they would not cut off their little finger to save a million of men from torture after their own death. Every man must judge of his own state of mind; though there is nothing on which people are more liable to make mistakes; and I am charitable enough to hope that the actions of such men would be in practice as different as possible from what they anticipate in theory. But it is enough to say that experience, if it proves any thing, proves this to be an inaccurate view of human nature. All the threats of theologians with infinite stores of

time and torture to draw upon, failed to wean men from sins which gave them a passing gratification, even when faith was incomparably stronger than it is now, or is likely to be again. One reason, doubtless, is that the conscience is as much blunted by the doctrines of repentance and absolution as it is stimulated by the threats of hell-fire. But is it not contrary to all common-sense to expect that the motive will retain any vital strength when the very people who rely upon it admit that it rests on the most shadowy of grounds? The other motive, which is supposed to be so incomparably weaker that it cannot be used as a substitute, has yet proved its strength in every age of the world. As our knowledge of nature and the growth of our social development impress upon us more strongly every day that we live the close connection in which we all stand to each other, the intimate "solidarity" of all human interests, it is not likely to grow weaker; a young man will break a blood-vessel for the honor of a boat-club; a savage will allow himself to be tortured to death for the credit of his tribe; why should it be called visionary to believe that a civilized human being will make personal sacrifices for the benefit of men whom he has perhaps not

seen, but whose intimate dependence upon himself he realizes at every moment of his life? May not such a motive generate a predominant passion with men framed to act upon it by a truly generous system of education? And is it not an insult to our best feelings and a most audacious feat of logic, to declare on *à priori* grounds that such feelings must be a straw in the balance when weighed against our own personal interest in the fate of a being whose nature is inconceivable to us, whose existence is not certain, whose dependence upon us is indeterminate, simply because it is said that, in some way or other, it and we are continuous?

The real meaning, however, of this clinging to another life is doubtless very different. It is simply an expression of the reluctance of the human being to use the awful word "never." As the years take from us, one by one, all that we have loved, we try to avert our gaze; we are fain to believe that in some phantom world all will be given back to us, and that our toys have only been laid by in the nursery upstairs. Who, indeed, can deny that to give up these dreams involves a cruel pang? But, then, who but the most determined optimist can deny that a cruel pang is inevitable? Is not the

promise too shadowy to give us real satisfaction? The whole lesson of our lives is summed up in teaching us to say "never" without needless flinching, or, in other words, in submitting to the inevitable. The theologian bids us repent, and waste our lives in vain regrets for the past, and in tremulous hopes that the past may yet be the future. Science tells us—what, indeed, we scarcely need to learn from science—that what is gone, is gone, and that the best wisdom of life is the acceptance of accomplished facts.

> The moving finger writes, and having writ
> Moves on, nor all your pity nor wit
> Can move it back to cancel half a line,
> Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

Never repent, unless by repentance you mean drawing lessons from past experience. Beating against the bars of fate you will only wound yourself, and mar what yet remains to you. Grief for the past is useful so far as it can be transmuted into renewed force for the future. The love of those we have lost may enable us to love better those who remain, and those who are to come. So used, it is an infinitely precious possession, and to be cherished with all our

hearts. As it leads to vain regrets, it is at best an enervating enjoyment, and a needless pain. The figments of theology are a consecration of our delusive dreams; the teaching of the new faith should be the utilization of every emotion to the bettering of the world of the future.

The ennobling element of the belief in a future life is beyond the attack, or rather is strengthened by the aid, of science. Science, like theology, bids us look beyond our petty personal interests, and cultivate faculties other than the digestive. Theology aims at stimulating the same instincts, but provides them with an object in some shifting cloud-land of the imagination instead of the definite *terra firma* of this tangible earth. The imagination, bound by no external laws, may form what rules it pleases, and may therefore lend itself to a refined selfishness, or to dreamy sentimentalism. When we rise beyond ourselves we are most in need of some definite guidance, and in the greatest danger of following some delusive phantom. The process illustrated by this case is operative throughout the whole sphere of religious thought. The essence of theology, as popularly understood, is the division of the universe into two utterly disparate elements.

God is conceived as a ruler external to the ordinary series of phenomena, but intervening at more or less frequent intervals; between the natural and the supernatural, the human and the divine element, there can be no proper comparison. Man must be vile that God may be exalted; reason must be folly when put beside revelation; the force of man must be weakness when it encounters Providence. Wherever, in short, we recognize the Divine hand, we can but prostrate ourselves in humble adoration. In franker times, when people meant what they said, this creed was followed to its logical results. The dogmas of the literal inspiration of the Scripture, or of the infallibility of the Church, recognized the presence of a flawless perfection in the midst of utter weakness. The corruption of human nature, the irresistible power of Divine grace, the magical efficacy of the Sacraments are corollaries from the same theory. In the phraseology popular with a modern school we are told that the essence of Christianity is the belief in the fatherhood of God. That doctrine is intelligible and may be beautiful so long as we retain a sufficient degree of anthropomorphism. But as our conceptions of the universe and, therefore, of its

Ruler are elevated, we too often feel that the use of the word "father" does not prevent the weight of His hand from crushing us. If noble souls can convert even suffering into useful discipline, it is but a flimsy optimism which covers all suffering by the name of paternal chastisement. The universe partitioned between infinite power and infinite weakness becomes a hopeless chaos; and when we proceed farther, and try to identify the Divine and the human elements amidst this intricate blending of good and evil we are in danger of vital error at every step. What, in fact, can be more disastrous, and yet more inevitable, than to mistake our corrupt instincts for the voice of God, or, on the other hand, to condemn the Divine intimations as sinful? How can we avoid at every instant committing the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the ineffable Holiness? And if, indeed, the distinction be groundless, are we not of necessity dislocating our conceptions of the universe, and hopelessly perplexing our sense of duty?

Take, for instance, one common topic which is typical of the general process. Divines never tire of holding up to us the example of Christ. If Christ were indeed a man like ourselves, his

example may be fairly quoted. We willingly place him in the very front rank of the heroes who have died for the good of our race. But if Christ were in any true sense God or inseparably united to God, the example disappears. We honor him because he endured agonies and triumphed over doubts and weaknesses that would have paralyzed a less noble soul. The agonies and the doubts and the weakness are unintelligible on the hypothesis of an incarnate God. Theologians escape by the old loophole of mystery, ordinary believers by thinking of Christ as man and God alternately. We can doubtless deceive ourselves by such juggling, but we cannot honestly escape from the inevitable dilemma. In paying a blasphemous reverence to Christ, theologians have either placed him beyond the reach of our sympathies, or have lowered God to the standard of humanity. Let us, if possible, dwell with an emotion of brotherly love on the sufferings of every martyr in the cause of humanity, but you sever the very root of our sympathy when you single out one as divine and raise him to the skies. Why stand we gazing into heaven when we have but to look round to catch the contagion of noble enthusiasm from men of our own race? The

ideal becomes meaningless when it is made supernatural.

The same perplexity meets us at every step; we are to follow Christ's example. Be humble, it is said, as Christ was humble. Theology indeed would prescribe annihilation rather than humiliation. Man in presence of the Infinite is absolutely nothing. Science, according to a glib commonplace of popular writers, agrees with theology in prescribing humility. But that very ambiguous word has a totally different meaning in the two cases. Science bids us recognize the inevitable limitation of our powers, and the feebleness of any individual as compared with the mass. We can do but little: and at every step we are dependent upon the co-operation of countless millions of our race and an indefinite series of past generations. We are like the coral insects, who can add but a hair's breadth to the structure which has been raised by their predecessors. Yet the little which we can do is something; and we will neither degrade ourselves nor our race. As measured by an absolute standard, man may be infinitesimal, but the absolute is beyond our powers. Science tells us that our little individuality might be swept out of existence without

appreciable injury to the world; but it adds that the world is built up of infinitesimal atoms, and that each must co-operate in the general result. Theology crushes us into nothingness by placing us in the presence of the infinite God; and then compensates by making us divine ourselves. Man is a mere worm, but he can by priestly magic bring God to earth; he is hopelessly ignorant, but set on a throne and properly manipulated he becomes an infallible vice-God; he is a helpless creature, and yet this creature can define with more than scientific accuracy the precise nature of his inconceivable Creator; he grovels on the ground as a miserable sinner and stands up to declare that he is the channel of Divine inspiration; all his wisdom is ignorance, but he has written one book of which every line is absolutely perfect: and meanwhile that which one man singles out as the Divine element is to another the diabolical, so strangely dim is our vision, and so imperceptible is the difference between the Infinite and the infinitesimal.

Or, again, we are to deny ourselves as Christ denied himself. But what are the limits and the purpose of this self-denial? Am I to carry on an indefinite warfare against the body, which

you say that God has given me, and to crush the physical for the sake of the spiritual element? What is the line between the spirit which is of God, and the body which is hopelessly corrupt? All sound reasoning prescribes a training with the given purpose of bringing the instincts of the individual into harmony with the interests of the whole social organism. Theology trying to lay down an absolute law sometimes encourages the extremes of asceticism; sometimes it inclines to antinomianism; and sometimes sanctions the condonation of sin in consideration of acts of humiliation.

We are to resign ourselves to God's will, say theologians, but what is God's will? If it is the inevitable, then theology falls in with free reason. But if God's will be, as theologians maintain, something which we are at liberty to resist or to obey, then resignation implies our ignoble yielding to evils which might be extirpated. Theology deifies the force of circumstances, when our life should be a victory over circumstances, and encourages us to repine over misfortunes, where all repining is useless.

Christ, you say, died for us; and Butler, in the book which still receives more praise than any other attempt at reconciling philosophy

and theology, tries to show that here, at least, the two doctrines are in harmony. He has probably produced, in men of powerful intellects, more atheism than he has cured; for he tries to demonstrate explictly what is tacitly assumed by most theologians—the injustice of God. The doctrine may be horrible, but he says that facts prove it to be true. His whole logic consists in simply begging the question by calling suffering punishment. That the potter should be angry with his pots is certainly inconceivable; but when you once attempt to trace the supernatural in life, it undoubtedly follows that God is not only weak with the creatures he has made, but punishes the innocent for the guilty. Theologians may rest complacently in such a conclusion; to unprejudiced persons, it appears to be the clearest illustration of the futility of their theories. Free thought declines to call suffering a punishment; but it admits and turns to account the undoubted fact, that men are so closely connected, that every injury inflicted upon one is inevitably propagated to others. If morality be the science of minimizing human misery, to say that sin brings suffering, is merely to express an identical proposition. The lesson, however, remains for us that

we should look beyond our petty, personal interests, because no act can be merely personal. The stone which we throw spreads widening circles to all eternity, and to realize that fact is to intensify the sense of responsibility; but the same doctrine translated into the theological dialect becomes shocking or "mysterious."

Finally, we are to love our brothers as Christ loved us. That, truly, is an excellent doctrine, but translated into the theological, does it not lose half its efficacy? Love them that are of the household is the more natural corollary from the Christian tenets than love all mankind. People sometimes express surprise that the mild doctrines of Christianity should be pressed into the service of persecution. What more natural? "We love you." says the theologian to the heathen, "but still you are children of the devil. We love men, but the human heart is desperately wicked. We love your souls, but we hate your bodies. We love you as brothers; but then God, who so loved the world as to give His Son to die for it, has left the vast majority to follow their own road to perdition, and given to us a monopoly of truth and grace. We can only follow His example, and adore the mysterious dispensations of Providence."

"Ah!" replies a different school, "that is indeed a blasphemous and hideous doctrine. We will not presume to divide the human from the divine. God is the father of all men; His grace is confined to no sect or creed. His revelation is made to the universal human heart as well as to a select number of prophets and apostles. He is known in the order of nature as well as by miracles. The body has been created by Him as well as the soul, and all instincts are of heavenly origin and require cultivation not extirpation."

Whether this doctrine is reconcilable with Christianity is a question not to be discussed here. It certainly does not imply those flat contradictions of the lessons of experience which emerge from the other method of thought. It asks us to believe no miracles. It involves no supernaturalism. Whatever is, is natural, and is at the same time divine. Stated, indeed, as a bare logical formula, the doctrine seems to elude our grasp. It is intelligible to say that Christ was divine and Mahomet human, for the statement implies a comparison between two different terms; but if you say that Christ and Mahomet are both of the same class, what does it matter whether you call them both di-

vine or both human? Every logical statement implies an exclusion as well as inclusion. To say that A is B is meaningless if you add that every other conceivable letter is also B. You attempt to make everybody rich by reckoning their property in pence instead of pounds, and the process, though at first sight attractive, is unsatisfactory. In fact, this phase of opinion generally slips back into the preceding. We find that exceptions are insensibly made, and that after pronouncing nature to be divine, it is tacitly assumed there is an indefinite region which is somehow outside nature. Few people have the reasoning tendency sufficiently developed to follow out this view to its logical result in Pantheism. Yet short of that, there is no really stable resting-place.

Let us glance, however, for a moment at the ordinary application of the doctrine. The theologian agrees with the man of science in admitting that we are governed by unalterable laws, or, as the man of science prefers to say, that the world shows nothing but a series of invariable sequences and co-existences. The difference is, in other words, that the theologian puts a legislator behind the laws, whilst the man of science sees nothing behind them

but impenetrable mystery. The difference, so far as any practical conclusions are concerned, is obviously nothing. The laws of Nature, you tell us, are the work of infinite goodness and wisdom. But we are utterly unable to say what infinite goodness and wisdom would do, except by showing what it has done. Therefore, the ultimate appeal of the theologian, is as unequivocally to the laws as the primary appeal of the man of science. He has made a show of going to a higher court only to be referred back again to the original tribunal. History, for example, shows that mankind blunders by degrees into an improved condition and calls the process progress. Theology can give no additional guaranty for progress, for a state of things once compatible may, for any thing we can say, always remain compatible with infinite wisdom and goodness. As a matter of historical fact, theology only suggested the dogma of man's utter vileness, and all genuine theologians are marked by their readiness to believe in deterioration instead of progress. They look forward to a future world instead of this. But what reason have they to believe in this future of blessedness? God's love for His creatures? But the

most prominent fact written on the whole surface of the world is what we cannot help calling the reckless and profuse waste of life. If every thing we see teaches us that millions of individuals are crushed at every step by the progress of the race, and if that process is, as it must be, compatible with infinite goodness, why suppose that infinite goodness will act differently in future? It is an ever-recurring but utterly fruitless sophistry which first infers God from nature, and then pronounces God to be different from nature.

The only meaning, indeed, which can be given to the theological statement when thus interpreted is that we should accustom ourselves to look with reverence and love upon the universe. That love and reverence are emotions which deserve our most strenuous efforts at cultivation; that we should be profoundly impressed by the vast system of which we form an infinitesimal part; that we should habitually think of ourselves in relation to the long perspective of events which stretches far away from us to the dim distance and toward the invisible future, are indeed lessons which all sound reasoning tends to confirm. But when we are invited to love and wonder at the world,

as the work of God, we must guard against the old trick of substitution which is constantly played upon us. Once more, the God of nature is turned into the God of a part of nature. Theology of the old stamp, so far from encouraging us to love nature, teaches us that it is under a curse. It teaches us to look upon the animal creation with shuddering disgust; upon the whole race of man, outside our narrow sect, as delivered over to the devil; and upon the laws of nature at large as a temporary mechanism, in which we have been caught, but from which we are to anticipate a joyful deliverance. It is science, not theology, which has changed all this; it is the atheists, infidels, and rationalists, as they are kindly called, who have taught us to take fresh interest in our poor fellow denizens of the world, and not to despise them because Almighty benevolence could not be expected to admit them to heaven; to the same teaching we owe the recognition of the noble aspirations embodied in every form of religion, and the destruction of the ancient monopoly of Divine influences; and it is science again that has taught us to accommodate ourselves to the laws in which we are placed, instead of fruitlessly struggling

against them and invoking miraculous interference to conquer them. The theology of which I am now speaking differs, indeed, radically from the old, so radically that one is at times surprised that the agreement, to use a common word, should reconcile vital differences in faith. But it often tends to the same end by a different path. It attempts to deny the existence of evils, instead of proclaiming their ultimate destruction. Every thing comes from a paternal hand; why struggle against it? Disease and starvation and nakedness are, somehow or other, parts of a divine system which is somehow or other deserving of our sincerest adoration. If anybody who is in fact naked or sick or starving takes that phrase in the sense that he had better submit cheerfully to evils which he cannot help, there is little to be said against it. If the doctrine of the Divine origin of all things is compatible with the belief that a vast number of things are utterly hateful, that we ought to spend our whole energy in eradicating them, and to protest against them with our latest breath, then the doctrine is certainly innocuous. But whether there is much use in language thus employed seems a little questionable; and, in any case, it is clear that it

really adds nothing, except words, to the teaching of science.

Here again people cling passionately to the old formulæ because they appear to sanction a soothing optimism. We cannot be happy, it is said, unless we believe that our wishes will be fulfilled; and we endeavor to convert our wishes into a guaranty for their own fulfilment. If we cannot make up our minds to say "never," neither can we resolve to admit that there is really evil. We passionately assert that the past will come back and that pain will turn out to be an illusion. The argument against the infidel comes essentially to this; you tell me that my hopes will not be realized, and therefore you make me necessarily and needlessly miserable. For God's sake, do not disperse my dreams. People are not satisfied with the answer that the nightmare has gone as well as the vision of bliss, and that fears are destroyed as much as hopes; because, as a matter of fact, they can contrive to dwell upon that part of the doctrine which is comfortable for the moment. We have power over our dreams though we conceal its exercise from ourselves. But the argument itself involves the fundamental fallacy. To destroy a groundless

hope is not to destroy a man's happiness. The instantaneous effort may be painful: but it is the price which we have to pay for a cure of deep-seated complaints. The infidel's reply is substantially this: I may destroy your hopes; but I do not destroy your power of hoping. I bid you no longer fix your mind on a chimera but on tangible and realizable prospects. I warn you that efforts to soar above the atmosphere can only lead to disappointment, and that time spent in squaring the circle is simply time spent. Apply your strength and your intellect on matters which lie at hand and on problems which admit of a solution. The happiest man is not the man who has the grandest dreams, but the man whose aspirations are best fitted to guide his talents: the most efficient worker is not the one who mistakes his own fancies for an external support, but he who has most accurately guaged the conditions under which he is laboring. Trust in Providence may lead you to pass successfully through dangers which would have repelled an unbeliever, or it may lead you to break your neck in pursuing a dream. It makes heroes and cowards, patriots and assassins, saints and bigots who each mistake their wisdom or their folly for divine inti-

mations. Providence for us can only be that aggregate of external forces to which willingly or unwillingly we must adapt ourselves. We should calmly calculate by all available means the conditions of our life, and then dare, without ignoring, the dangers that are inevitable. Through all human affairs there runs an element of uncertainty which cannot be suppressed, and we seek in vain to disguise it under names consecrated by old associations; there are evils which are only made more poignant by our efforts to explain them away; and to each of us will very speedily come an end of his labors in the world. We can best fortify ourselves by recognizing and submitting to the inevitable and by anchoring our minds on the firmest holding ground. Science will tell us that by working with the great forces that move the world, we may contribute some fragment to an edifice which will not be broken down; that to think for others instead of limiting our hopes to our petty interests is the best remedy for unavailing regret. We can take our part in the long warfare of man against the world, which is nothing else but the gradual accommodation of the race to the conditions of its dwelling-place. By so disciplining our

thoughts that we may fight eagerly and hopefully, we have the best security for happiness, and not in encouraging an idle dwelling upon visions which can never be verified, and which are apt to become most ghastly when we most wish for consolation.

To the question, then, from which I started, it seems that an unequivocal reply can be given. Why help to destroy the old faith from which people derive, or believe themselves to derive, so much spiritual solace? The answer is, that the loss is overbalanced by the gain. We lose nothing that ought to be really comforting in the ancient creeds; we are relieved from much that is burdensome to the imagination and to the intellect. Those creeds were indeed in great part the work of the best and ablest of our forefathers; they therefore provide some expression for the highest emotions of which our nature is capable; but, to say nothing of the lower elements which have intruded, of the concessions made to bad passions, and to the wants of a ruder form of society, they are at best the approximations to the truth of men who entertained a radically erroneous conception of the universe. Astronomers who went on the Ptolemaic theory

managed to provide a very fair description of the actual phenomena of the heavens; but the solid result of their labors was not lost when the Copernican system took its place; and incalculable advantages followed from casting aside the old cumbrous machinery of cycles and epicycles in favor of the simpler conceptions of the new doctrine. A similar change follows when man is placed at the centre of the religious and moral system. We still retain the faiths at which theologians arrived by a complex machinery of arbitrary contrivances destined to compensate one set of dogmas by another. The justice of God the Father is tempered by the mercy of God the Son, as the planet wheeled too far forward by the cycle is brought back to its place by the epicycle. When we strike out the elaborate arrangements, the truths which they aim at expressing are capable of far simpler statements; infinite error and distortion disappear, and the road is open for conceptions impossible under the old circuitous and erroneous methods.

We have arrived at the point from which we can detect the source of ancient errors, and extract the gold from the dross. One thing, indeed, remains for the present impossible.

The old creed, elaborated by many generations, and consecrated to our imaginations by a vast wealth of associations, is adapted in a thousand ways to the wants of its believers. The new creed—whatever may be its ultimate form—has not been thus formulated and hallowed to our minds. We, whose fetters are just broken, cannot tell what the world will look like to men brought up in the full blaze of day, and accustomed from infancy to the free use of their limbs. For centuries all ennobling passions have been industriously associated with the hope of personal immortality, and base passions with its rejection. We cannot fully realize the state of men brought up to look for a reward of heroic sacrifice in the consciousness of good work achieved in this world instead of in the hope of posthumous repayment. Nor again, have we, if we shall ever have, any system capable of replacing the old forms of worship by which the imagination was stimulated and disciplined. That such reflections should make many men pause before they reveal the open secret is intelligible enough. But what is the true moral to be derived from them? Surely that we should take courage and speak the truth. We should take courage, for even now

the new faith offers to us a more cheering and elevating prospect than the old. When it shall have become familiar to men's minds, have worked itself into the substance of our convictions, and provided new channels for the utterance of our emotions, we may anticipate incomparably higher results. We are only laying the foundations of the temple, and know not what will be the glories of the completed edifice. Yet already the prospect is beginning to clear. The sophistries which entangle us are transparent. That faith is not the noblest which enables us to believe the greatest number of articles on the least evidence; nor is that doctrine really the most productive of happiness which encourages us to cherish the greatest number of groundless hopes. The system which is really most calculated to make men happy is that which forces them to live in a bracing atmosphere; which fits them to look facts in the face and to suppress vain repinings by strenuous action instead of luxurious dreaming.

And hence, too, the time is come for speaking plainly. If you would wait to speak the truth until you can replace the old decaying formula by a completely elaborated system,

you must wait for ever; for the system can never be elaborated until its leading principles have been boldly enunciated. Reconstruct, it is said, before you destroy. But you must destroy in order to reconstruct. The old husk of dead faith is pushed off by the growth of living beliefs below. But how can they grow unless they find distinct utterance? and how can they be distinctly uttered without condemning the doctrines which they are to replace? The truth cannot be asserted without denouncing the falsehood. Pleasant as the process might be of announcing the truth and leaving the falsehood to decay of itself, it cannot be carried into practice. Men's minds must be called back from the present of phantoms and encouraged to follow the only path which tends to enduring results. We cannot afford to make the tacit concession that our opinions, though true, are depressing and debasing. No; they are encouraging and elevating. If the medicine is bitter to the taste, it is good for the digestion. Here and there, a bold avowal of the truth will disperse a pleasing dream, as here and there it will relieve us of an oppressing nightmare. But it is not by striking balances between these

pains and pleasures that the total effect of the creed is to be measured; but by the permanent influence on the mind of seeing things in their true light and dispersing the old halo of erroneous imagination. To inculcate reticence at the present moment is simply to advise us to give one more chance to the development of some new form of superstition. If the faith of the future is to be a faith which can satisfy the most cultivated as well as the feeblest intellects, it must be founded on an unflinching respect for realities. If its partisans are to win a definitive victory, they must cease to show quarter to lies. The problem is stated plainly enough to leave no room for hesitation. We can distinguish the truth from falsehood, and see where confusion has been reproduced, and truth pressed into the service of falsehood. Nothing more is wanted but to go forward boldly, and reject once for all the weary compromises and elaborate adaptations which have become a mere vexation to all honest men. The goal is clearly in sight, though it may be distant; and we decline any longer to travel in disguise by circuitous paths, or to apologize for being in the right. Let us think freely and speak

plainly, and we shall have the highest satisfaction that man can enjoy—the consciousness that we have done what little lies in ourselves to do for the maintenance of the truths on which the moral improvement and the happiness of our race depend.

END.

Date Due